READER'S DIGEST

# Useful things to sew

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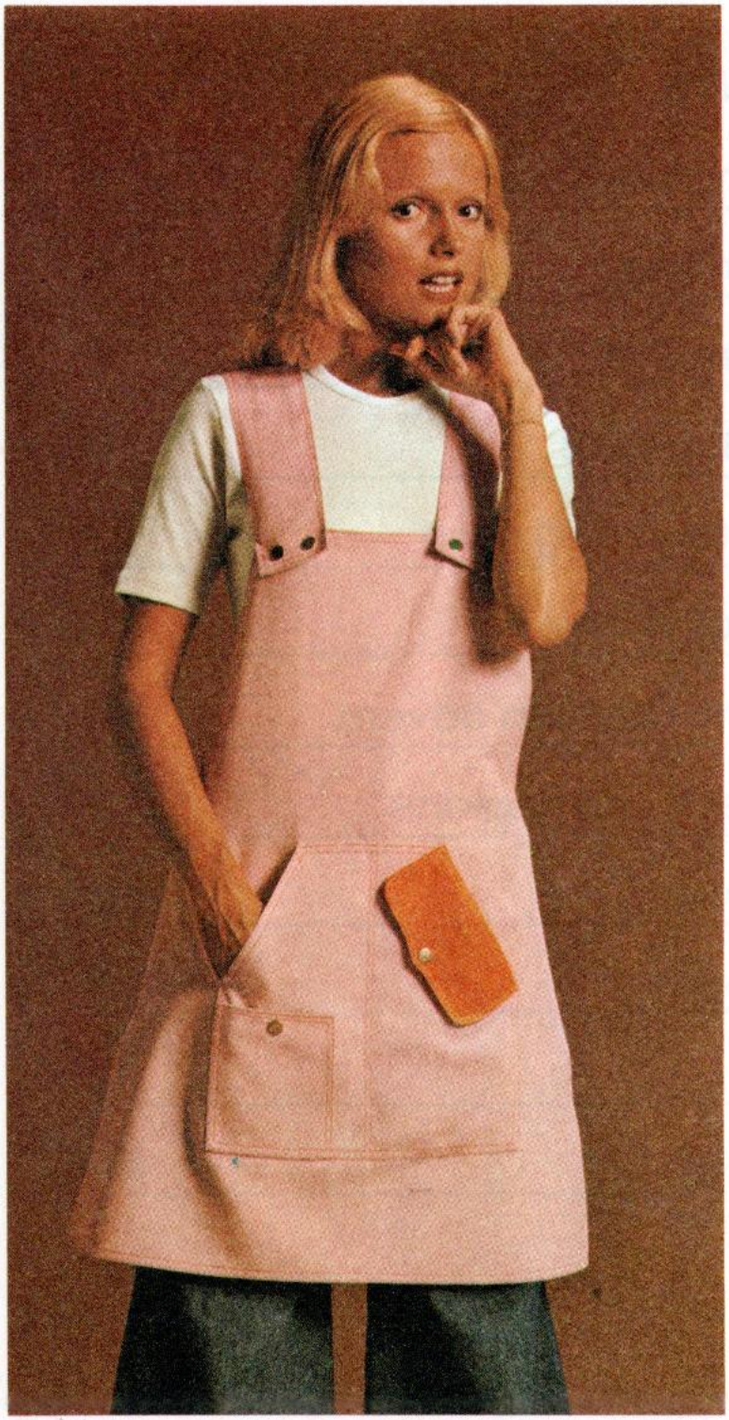
CONTENTS

Gardening pinafore 2
Shoulder bag 6
Barrel bag 8
Convertible quilt 10
Hooded towelling robe 11
Giant floor cushion 14
Geometric cushion covers 16
Place mats and napkins 17
Oven glove 18
Patchwork 19
Rag doll 22
Felt mouse 24

# Gardening pinafore



Made out of a sturdy cotton, such as duck or denim, this gardening pinafore will take long, hard wear and lots of laundering.

Seams are topstitched all around for durability, and there are several roomy pockets to make this a very practical garment.

The pattern will fit up to a hip measurement of 100 cm; for larger sizes, adjust the pattern as needed.

## Materials needed

1.8 m of 115 cm fabric for the pinafore
One 40 × 13 cm piece of contrasting fabric for the pocket flap
2 medium size no-sew snap fasteners
4 heavy-duty no-sew snap fasteners
1 sheet of paper, 110 × 80 cm (or use two sheets of dressmaker's pattern guide paper, marked in 5 cm squares)
Appropriate thread

## Making the pattern

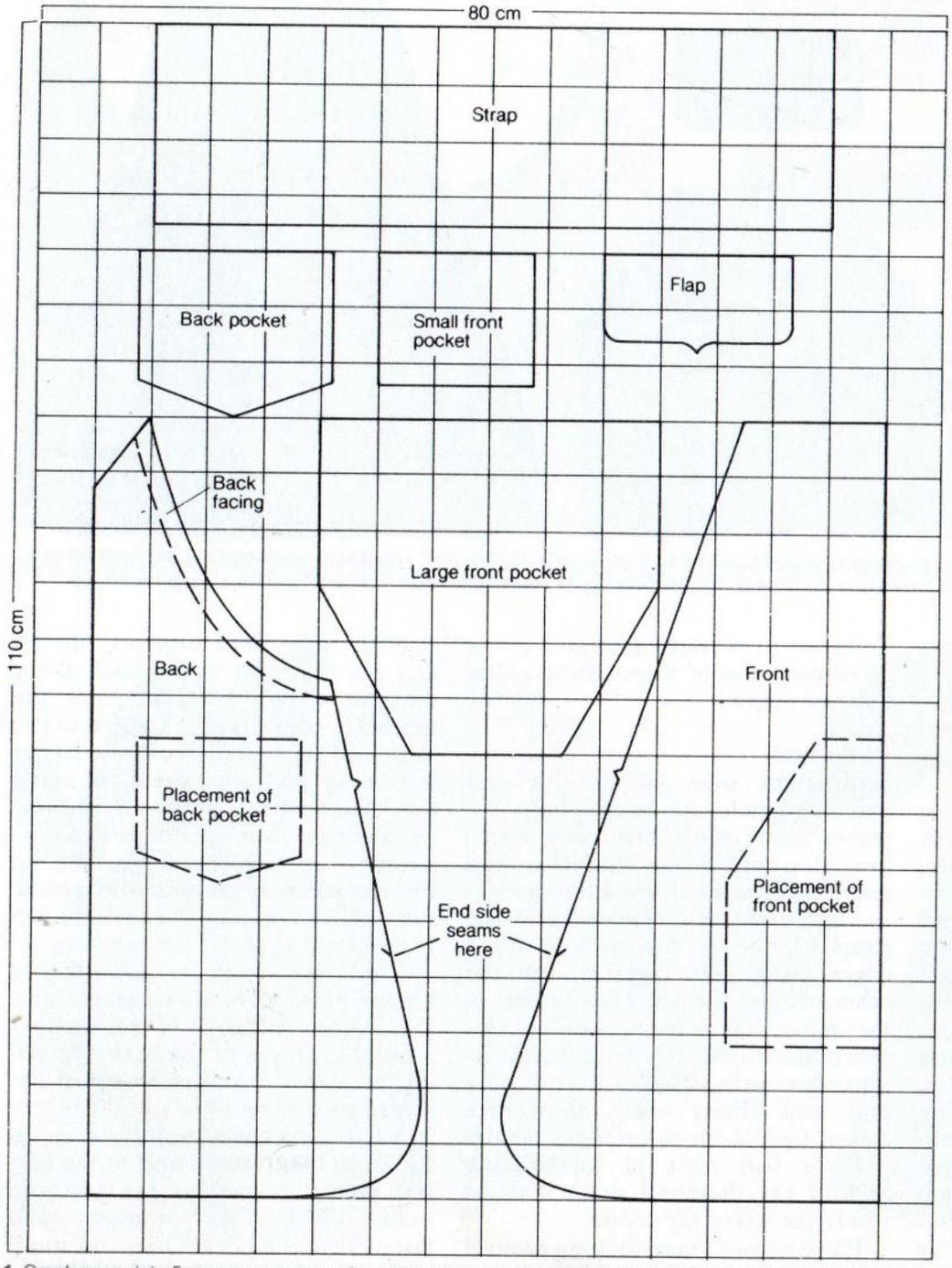
Rule the sheet of paper into 5 cm squares. Reproduce the pattern pieces on it. (Or draw the pattern pieces on the sheets of dressmaker's pattern guide paper.) All pieces include 1.5 cm seam allowances.

Name and mark each piece as shown in diagram 1. Cut out each piece carefully.

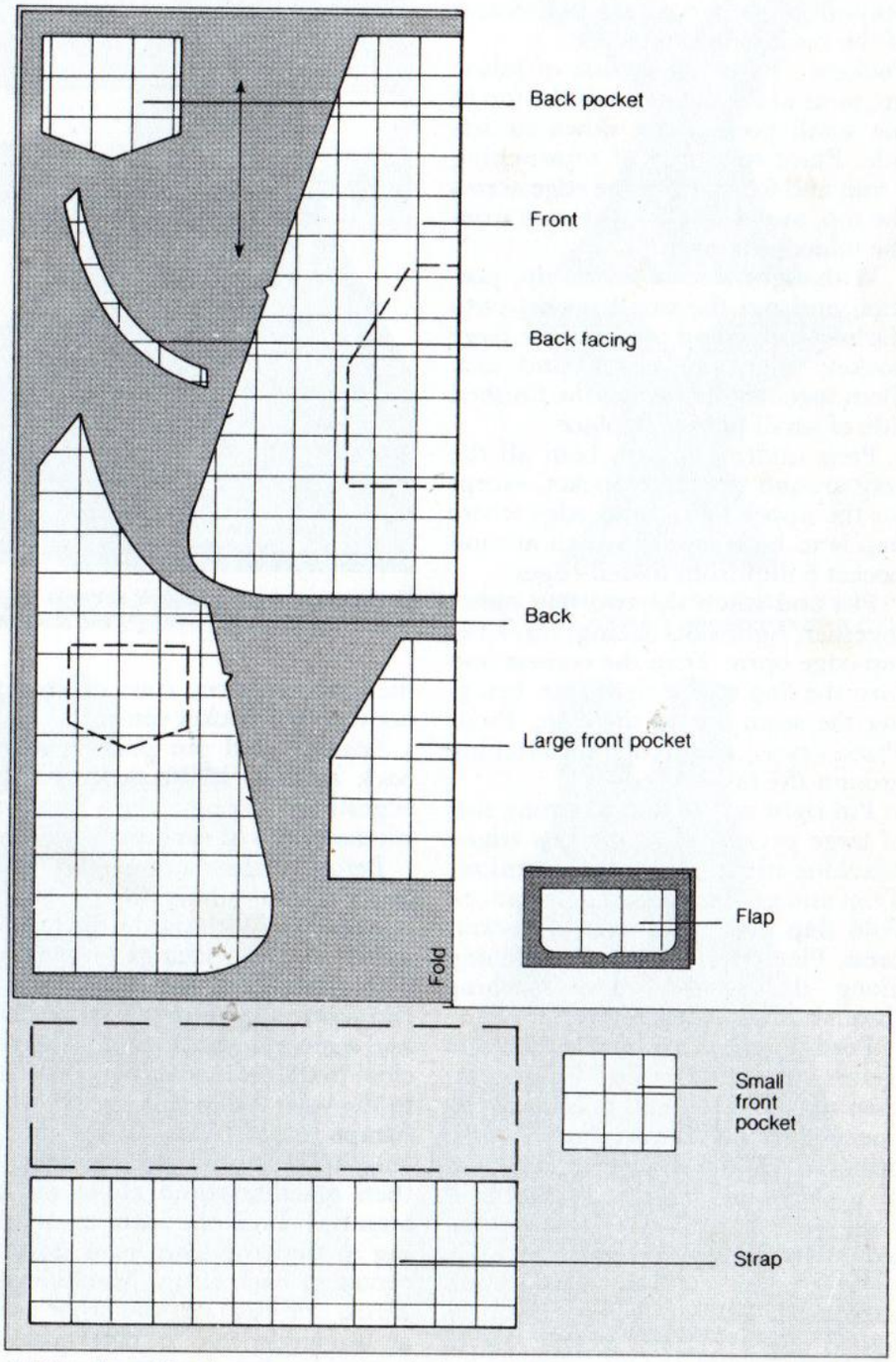
## Cutting

Fold the fabric in half lengthwise, with wrong sides together, and align the selvages. Pin the paper pattern pieces (except the pocket flap) along the straight grain, placing the centre front and large pocket on the fold, as shown in diagram 2. Cut out the pattern pieces.

Fold the contrasting fabric in half, wrong sides together. Pin flap pattern to it and cut out flap.




1 Graph paper into 5 cm squares; reproduce pattern pieces shown, which include 1.5 cm seam allowances.




2 Follow the cutting diagram above; place each pattern piece on the straight grain of fabric.

## Construction

Staystitch the curved armhole seams of the back pinafore pieces.

**Pockets** With wrong side of fabric up, press under 1 cm across the top of the small pocket and down its left side. Place two rows of topstitching 3 mm and 6 mm from the edge across the top, and a single row 6 mm from the folded side edge.

With right side of fabric up, position and pin the small pocket onto the lower left-hand corner of the large pocket; align raw edges, and tack them together. Topstitch the finished side of small pocket in place.

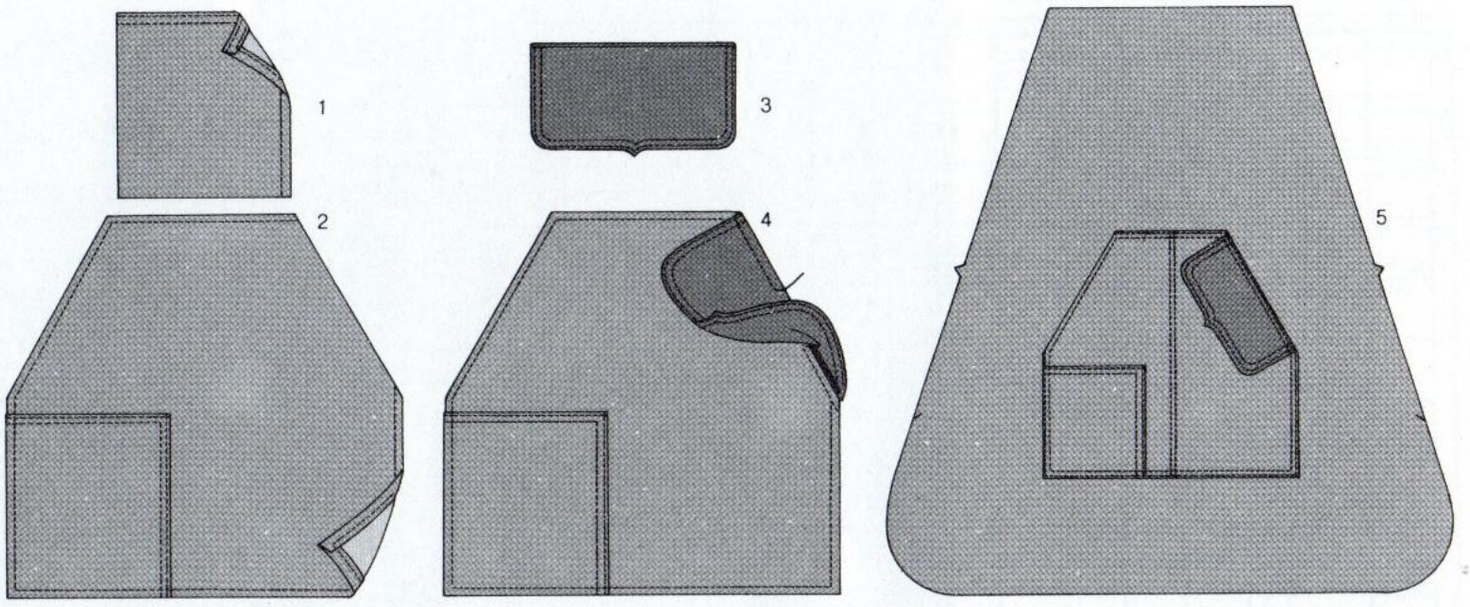
Press under a 1.5 cm hem all the way around the large pocket, except for the upper right-hand edge where flap is to be sewn. Topstitch around pocket 6 mm from folded edges.

Pin and stitch the two flap pieces together, right sides facing; leave the top edge open. Trim the corners and turn the flap to the right side, bringing the seam out to the edge. Press. Place two rows of topstitching around the finished edges.

Pin right side of flap to wrong side of large pocket; align the raw edges. Machine-stitch along the seamline. Trim and grade the seam allowances. Fold flap over right side of pocket; press. Place two rows of topstitching along the turned edge, stitching through all thicknesses.

Position the large pocket on the centre of the pinafore front. Pin, then machine-edgestitch, around the pocket, leaving the two slanted edges open; secure the stitches at each end of the opening. To divide pocket in half, place two rows of topstitching up the centre of the pocket.

Press under a 1.5 cm hem around each back pocket, 6 mm from its folded edges. Place a second row of stitching along the top edge only, then crisscross two rows of topstitching through pocket centre.




**To construct front pockets,** turn under edges of small pocket and stitch (1). Sew small pocket to the large pocket, and finish the edges around the large pocket (2). Complete the flap (3) and attach it to the edge of the large pocket (4). Stitch large pocket to pinafore front and topstitch through centre (5).

Position and pin pockets to each back section. Hand-tack and then edgestitch along the single-topstitched sides of each pocket.

Before constructing the straps, apply the armhole facing to both back pieces. With right sides together, match and pin facings to back armhole curve. Tack and stitch; trim and clip seam allowances. Extend facing and seam allowances and understitch close to the seamline. Turn the facing to the wrong side and press.

**Straps** Fold each strap in half lengthwise, right sides together. Pin, then machine-stitch along the long seamline. Press the seam open, pressing so that the seam runs down the centre of each strap. Machine-stitch across one end; cut the other end off at an angle that is determined by measuring 2 cm in from the raw edge. Turn straps to right side and press; place two rows of topstitching along finished edges.

## Assembly

With right sides facing, pin and machine-stitch the back pieces together along the centre back seamline; stop and secure stitches at top seamline crossing. Press seam open.

Align and pin the raw edge of one strap to one of the back pointed edges, right sides together. Pin the other strap to the other back point in the same way; straps should cross over. Machine-stitch both straps as pinned, securing stitches at beginning and end. Press seam allowances down; tack them to armhole facing.

Place two rows of topstitching around the diamond shape formed where the two straps cross.

Place a row of easestitching around bottom curves of front and back.

With right sides together, match and pin the front to the back along the side seams. Starting from the armhole, machine-stitch down to the indicated marking; secure stitches at beginning and end. Press the seam flat, then open; continue pressing the unstitched portion of the seam allowances to the wrong side, pulling up the easestitching around the curves. Press under 1.5 cm along both the top and bottom edges of the pinafore.

Place two rows of topstitching around all edges of the pinafore front. Then place two rows of topstitching around all edges of the back, including two rows down each side of the centre back seam.

Secure two large snap fasteners to the end of each strap and to the corresponding points on the pinafore front. Secure the smaller snap fasteners to the pocket flap and small pocket (see illustration on page 2).

# Shoulder bag

This capacious shoulder bag takes little sewing skill or time. The pieces are just a front and back, joined by circular straps that form bottom and sides. Change or keys can be kept in the handy outside pocket, which is fastened with nylon tape.

For shape and strength, fabric layers are double and all the edges are bound.

### Materials needed

1 m of 115 cm fabric
5.5 m of fold-over braid
5 cm of nylon tape fastener
Appropriate thread

### Cutting

Fold the fabric in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, and line up the selvages. Following diagram 1, cut four 32 × 35 cm rectangles along the straight grain for the body of the bag. Cut two long bands (each of them 5 × 110 cm) and two shorter bands (each 5 × 70 cm) for the straps.

Also cut two 14 × 10 cm rectangles for the pocket and two 14 × 5 cm rectangles for the flap.

Carefully round off the bottom corners of the pocket, the flap, and the front and back pieces of the bag; use a jar lid or a sewing gauge to obtain a uniform curve on each piece.

### Assembly

With wrong sides facing, pin the two layers of each piece (pocket, flap, front and back) together and machine-tack around the edges.

Bind the tops of the front and back pieces and the pocket with fold-over braid, then machine-topstitch with the wider part of the braid on the underside.

Apply the fold-over braid in the same way to the sides and bottoms of the pocket, turning under 6 mm at each end. Bind only the sides and bottoms of the flap.

Pull apart the hooked and looped halves of the nylon tape fastener. Centre and pin the hooked half of the tape to the underside of the flap, just above the braid. Centre and pin the looped half of the tape to the top edge of the pocket, just below the braid. Machine-stitch both of the tape pieces in place.

Pin the pocket to the right-hand corner of the bag front, placing the pocket 4 cm from the bottom and 4 cm from the side edges of the bag. Tack the pocket in place and edgestitch around its side and bottom edges, securing the stitches at beginning and end.

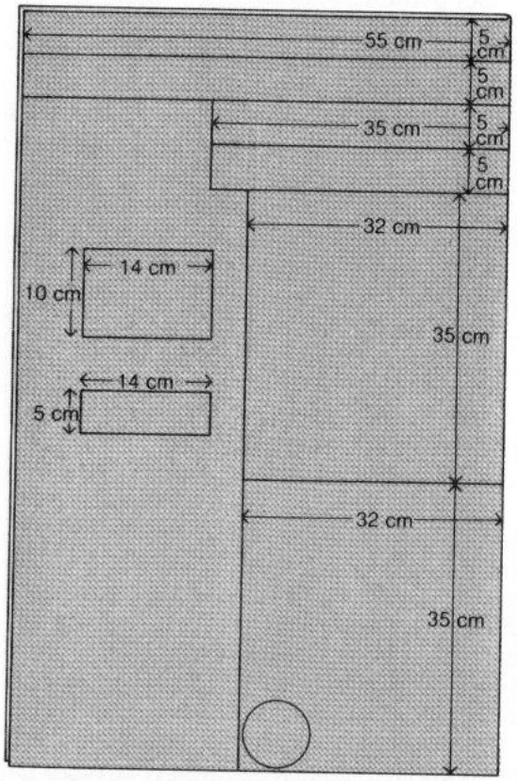
Turn and press under a 6 mm hem at the top of the flap. Pin the flap over the pocket, aligning the surfaces of the nylon tape. Machine-stitch across the top edge of the flap with either a narrow zigzag stitch or two rows of straight stitching.

With right sides together, seam one long band to one short band to form a circular strap. Press seams open. Do the same for the remaining long and short bands. With wrong sides facing, place the two straps together, then machine-tack along both edges.

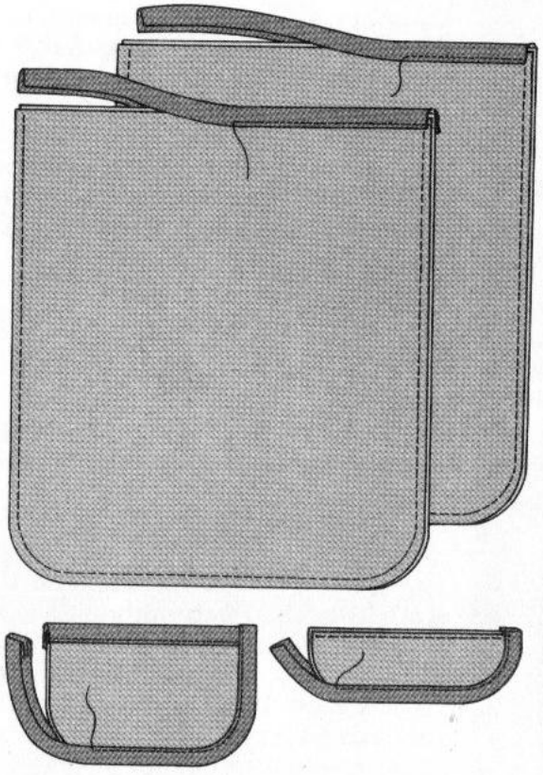
With the wrong side of the bag front against the strap, pin the two edges together; place the seams of the strap at each side of the bag. Machine-tack as pinned.

Starting at the bottom of the bag, wrap and pin braid around the raw edges of the bag front and strap; before overlapping the braid ends, turn under 6 mm on one end. Machine-topstitch the binding in place, keeping the wider part of the braid on the underside.

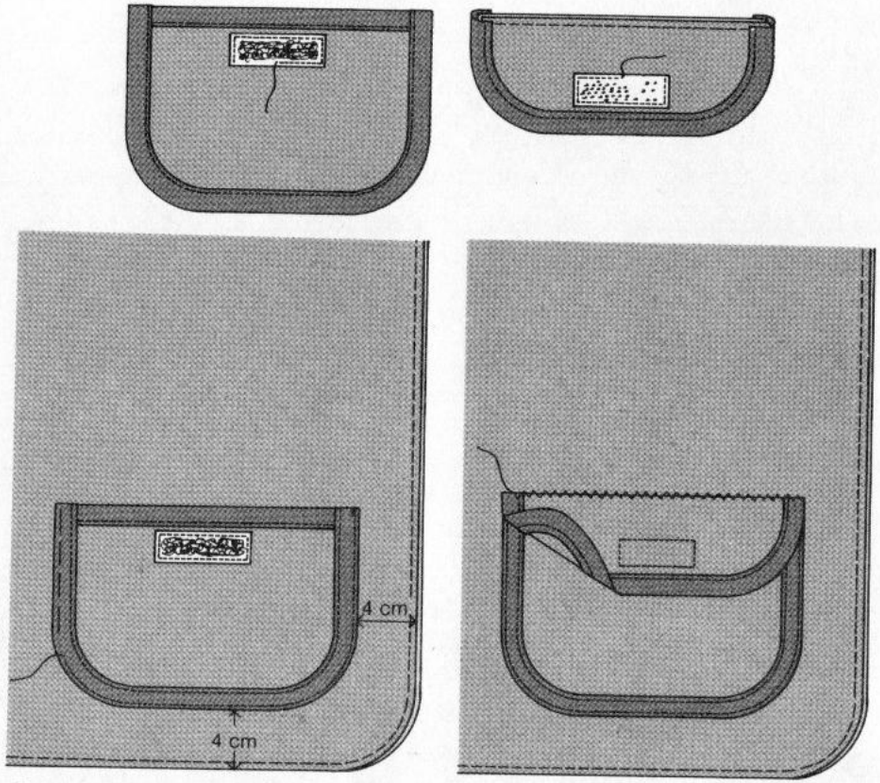
Join the back of the bag to the strap and attach braid in the same way.



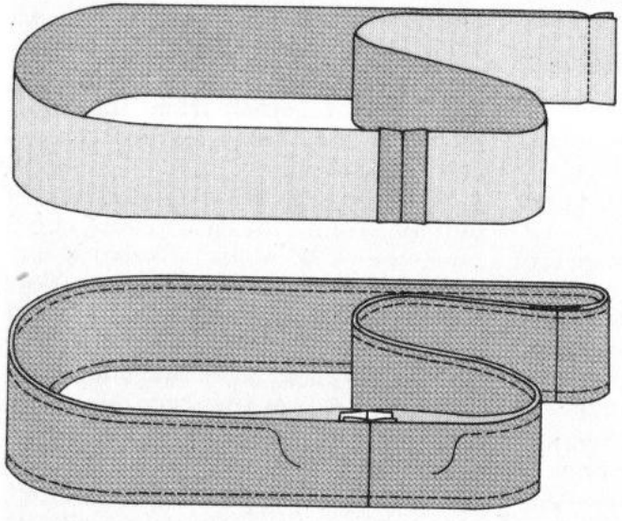

**1** Cut shoulder bag pieces and round off corners.



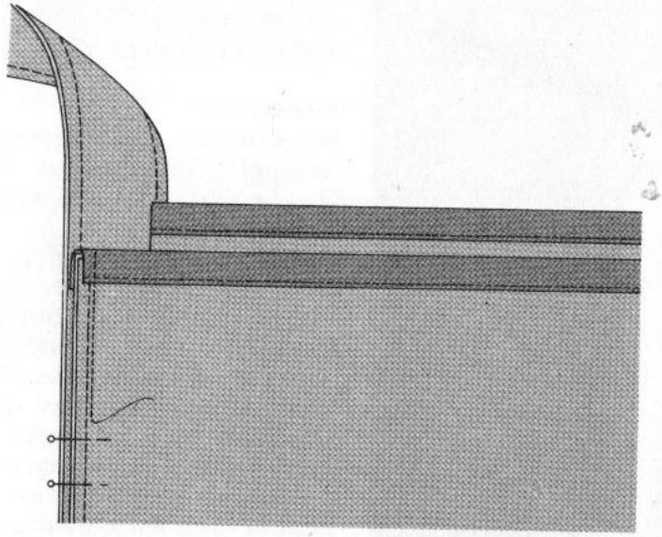
**2** Bind designated raw edges with fold-over braid.



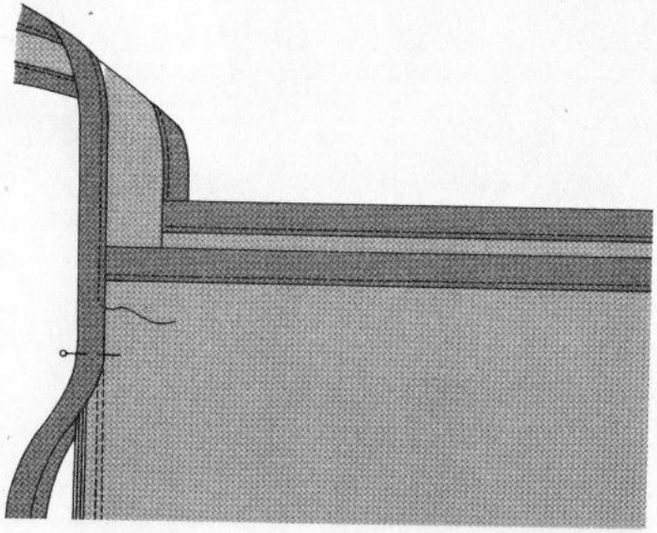

**3** Apply two halves of nylon tape to pocket and flap; stitch pocket and flap to front of bag.



**4** Form circular strap, then machine-tack two straps together.



**5** Machine-tack the circular strap to the front and back of bag.



**6** Bind raw edges of the strap and bag with fold-over braid.

# Barrel bag

A barrel bag is useful for carrying shopping, beachwear or sports gear. The long zippered opening makes it easy to pack and unpack; the design makes it easy to sew in a day.

If you'd like it larger, simply alter the pattern measurements, and perhaps run the handles all the way around for extra support. For beach use, add a waterproof lining.

### Materials needed

0.7 m of 115 cm fabric for bag
0.2 m of 90 cm iron-on interfacing
One 35 cm zipper
0.1 m of 90 cm lightweight fabric for zipper stay
Appropriate thread

### Cutting

Cut a 55 × 58 cm rectangle on the straight grain of the fabric for the body of the bag. Cut two 50 × 12 cm rectangles for the handles, and two circles, each 18 cm in diameter, for the ends. One centimetre seam allowances are included on all pieces.

Cut a 45 × 8 cm strip of lightweight fabric for the zipper stay.

Cut two 48 × 10 cm strips of iron-on interfacing.

### Assembly

Staystitch the two longer edges of the rectangle. Thread-mark the centre lines between the width and length of the rectangle.

On the wrong side of the large rectangle, centre the zipper and mark its position along the rectangle's width. Mark stitching lines 3 mm away from the centred zipper line. With right sides together, pin stay over zipper area and tack in place. Machine-stitch around on the marked lines.

Slash down the centre to within 1 cm of both ends, then cut into corners. Turn stay to inside and press. Topstitch around opening, placing stitching 1 cm from the long edges and 1.2 cm from the edges at the ends. Crisscross the stitching at each end.

Close the zipper tapes above the top stop with a bar tack. Centre zipper under the opening; pin, tack, then edgestitch in place.

To make handles, centre the iron-on interfacing on the wrong side of each handle; press in place. Fold handle in half lengthwise, right sides together, and pin. Machine-stitch around, leaving an 8 cm opening in centre of long edge. Trim seam allowances and taper corners.

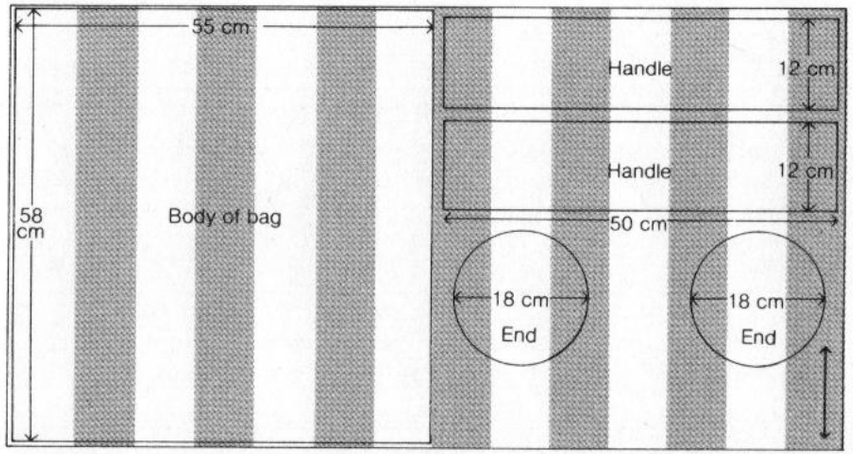
Turn the handle right side out; pull out corners. Press the handle flat, rolling the seams out to the edges. Edgestitch around the handle.

Mark handle positions so that they are centred, with ends 16 cm apart and about 10 cm from the zipper edge. Pin one of the handles to the bag; topstitch a square at each end, crisscrossing the stitching in each square. Attach the other handle to the opposite side.

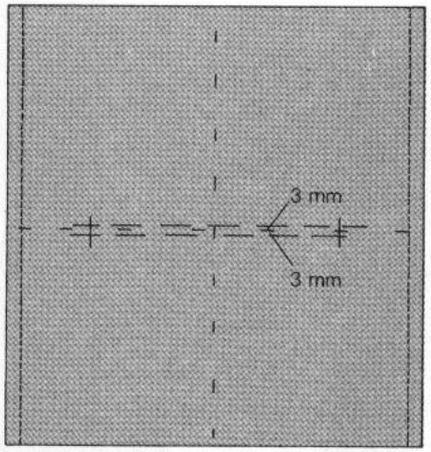
Fold one circle in half and cut a tiny notch at the foldline on each end. With right sides facing, position the circle at one end of the bag; pin bag and circle together from the top, matching the thread-marked centre line with one notch.

With the bag facing you, continue pinning around the entire circle, clipping the bag seam allowance as necessary to go around the curve; the bottom seam allowances of the bag should meet at the bottom notch of the circle. Tack, then stitch around circle, securing stitches at beginning and end. Finish other end of bag the same way.

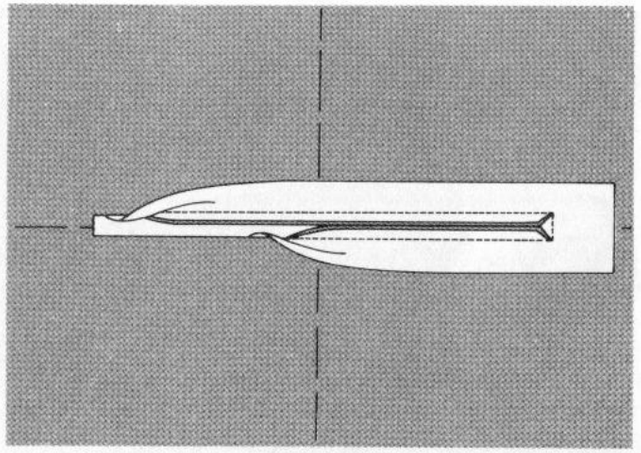
Open zipper; right sides together, sew bottom seam allowances. Press open; turn bag right side out.



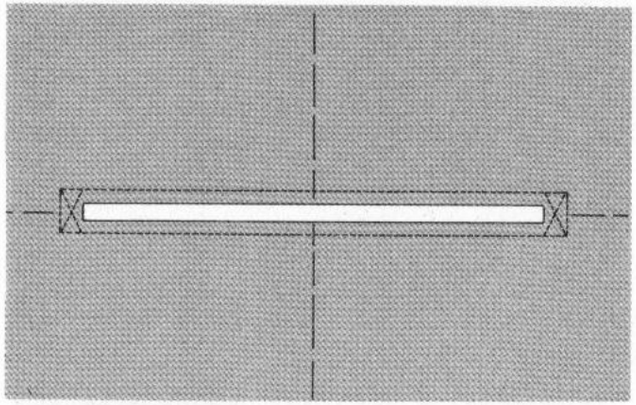

**1** Cut out all the pieces for the barrel bag. 1 cm seam allowances are already included.



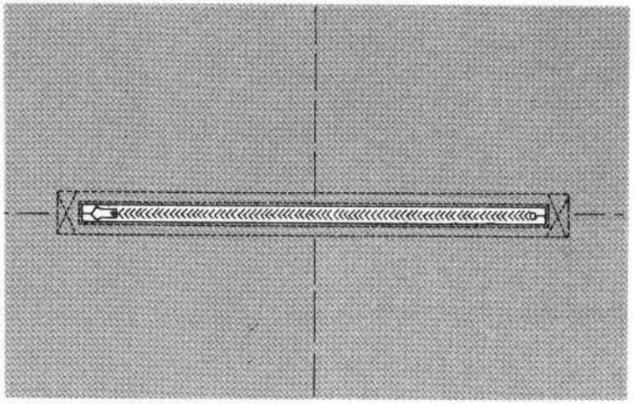

**2** Mark zipper position along the centre.



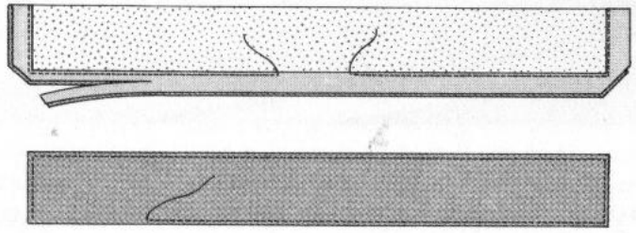
**3** Stitch the stay in place; slash through centre; turn it inside.



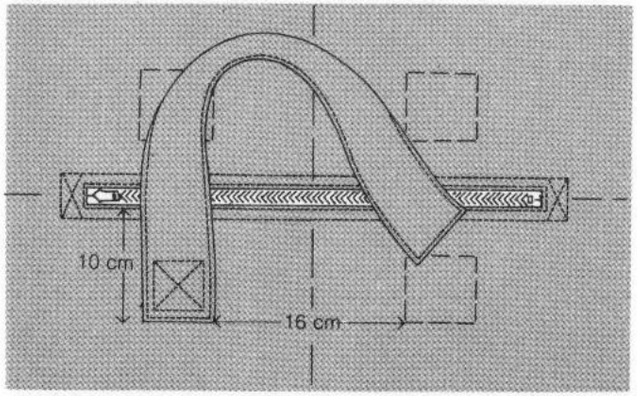
**4** Topstitch around opening, crisscrossing the stitching at ends.



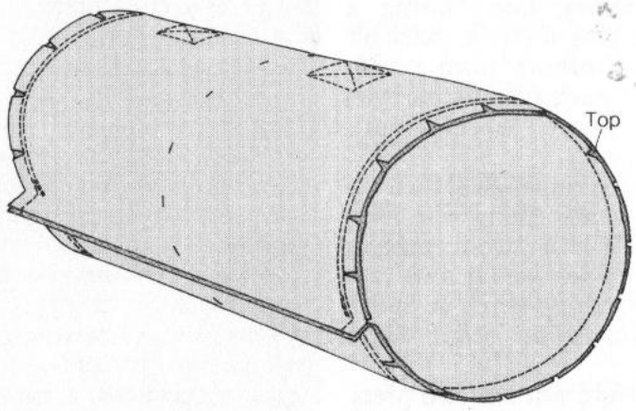
**5** Centre the zipper under opening, then edgestitch in place.



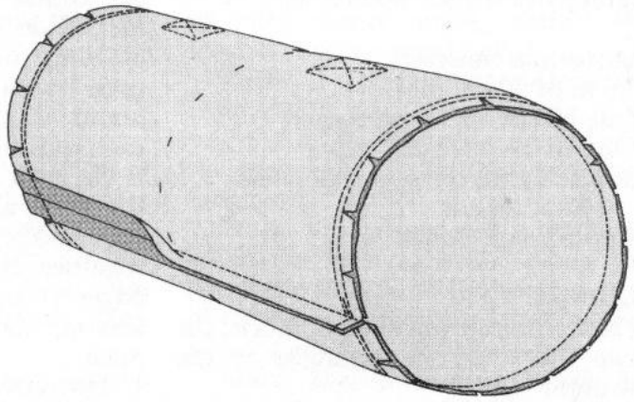
**6** Stitch each handle; turn, then topstitch along the outer edges.




**7** Pin and stitch handle in place; crisscross the stitching at ends.

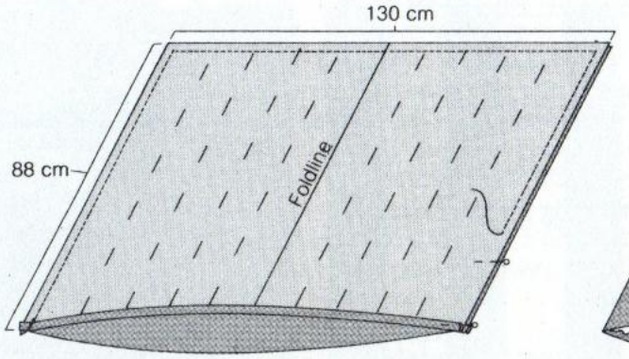



**8** Pin, tack and stitch the circles to each end of the barrel bag.

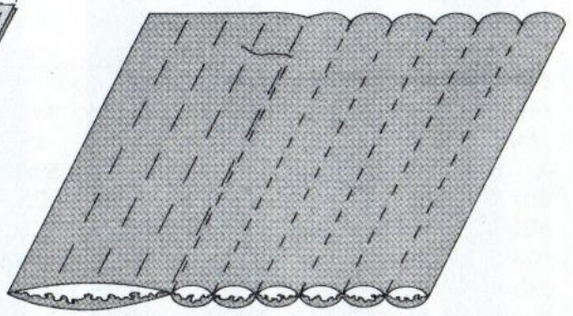


**9** Complete the seam along bottom of the bag; press seam open.

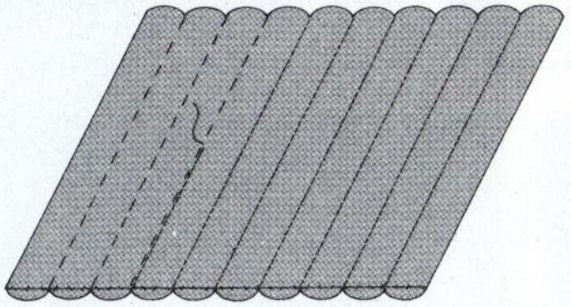
# Convertible quilt



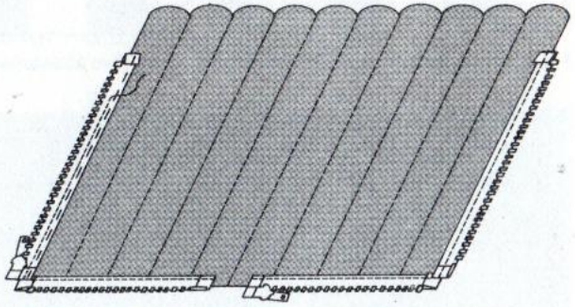

1 Turn up seam allowances on one edge, stitch others.



2 Fill; tack quilting rows, working from centre out.



3 Slipstitch opening; topstitch quilting rows.



4 Stitch open-end zippers to bottom and sides.

With the aid of a pair of open-end zippers, this baby's coverlet works two ways: zipped-up it's a sleeping bag; unzip the bag, and it's a quilt.

Make sure that the fabric and the filling you use are washable.

### Materials needed

2.6 m of 90 cm fabric
One 60 cm open-end zipper
One 70 cm open-end zipper
Sheet of Dacron, approximately
130 × 90 cm
Appropriate thread

### Cutting

From a double thickness of fabric, cut two 130 × 90 cm rectangles on the straight grain.

Dimensions include 2 cm seam allowances on all of the four edges.

### Assembly

Fold the 130 cm width of one rectangle in half and press. (This marks the centre quilting line.) Using a metre rule and pins or chalk, mark off quilting rows, working from centre press line out to each side. Mark rows about 12 cm apart. Thread-mark each quilting row.

On each of the rectangles, turn up the seam allowance along one long edge and press. Pin the two rectangles together, right sides facing and raw edges even; machine-stitch around, leaving the turned-up seam edges open.

Turn cover right side out and press. (Optional step at this point: topstitch 1 cm inside the stitched edges. This will provide flat edges for easier zipper insertion.)

Through the opening in the cover, insert the sheet of Dacron, cut slightly larger than the cover to ensure a generous filling for quilting.

Tack quilting rows by hand. Tack the centre row first, making sure that the filling is equally divided between the two sides. Then tack the other rows, again working from the centre line out. Slipstitch the open edges closed.

Topstitch along the tacked rows; remove tacking stitches.

The two open-end zippers are attached along the sides and bottom edge of the quilt. First separate the 60 cm zipper and pin its two tapes, wrong side up, across the width, with top ends at the corners. Bottoms will almost meet at centre of width. Turn under excess tape at the tops. Position the zipper on the cover so that the marked guideline of the tape is along the finished edge of the cover.

Tack zipper in place, stitching near the finished edge. It may be necessary to push filling back slightly from the edge. Machine-stitch from top to bottom, backstitching at both ends.

Follow the same procedure for the 70 cm zipper, positioning it so that its bottom end slightly overlaps the other zipper tape. Its top will fall about 16 cm below the slipstitched edge of the rectangle.

Whipstitch the overlapping ends of the zippers together.

# Hooded towelling robe

This towelling robe, equally useful for beach or bathroom, is easy to make. The four pattern pieces can be traced directly onto your fabric.

Separate patterns are given for men and women, and for children (ages 6 to 12).

Terry towelling is a good fabric choice. Shorn terry cloth, with the shorn side out, not only has a rich velvety look but is also snagproof. Consider also a lightweight woollen or brushed cotton for winter use.

### Materials needed

3.2 m of 115 cm fabric for men or women
2.4 m of 115 cm fabric for children
0.5 m of 115 cm fabric in contrasting colour for banding
2.1 m of decorative rope for belt
Appropriate thread

### Cutting

Fold the large piece of fabric in half lengthwise, lining up selvages. Draw the pattern pieces directly onto the fabric, following the measurements given in the diagram on the next page. Seam allowances of 1.5 cm are included on each pattern piece.

Cut out each piece, carefully notching as indicated.

Cut the contrasting fabric into strips as follows: 5 cm strips to make about 3 metres; 8 cm strips to make about 2 metres.

### Assembly

If necessary, overcast the raw edges of each piece with zigzag stitches before beginning to assemble garment.

With right sides together, pin the sleeve extensions to the front and back sections. Machine-stitch, then press the seams open.

With right sides together, line up the front and back sections and pin the two together along the shoulder seamline. Machine-stitch, beginning 8 cm from sleeve end and stopping at the notch; secure stitches at beginning and end. Clip seam allowances at the starting point.

With right sides facing and notches matched, pin one side of the hood to one front section along the shoulder line; machine-stitch to notch and secure stitches. Pin and stitch the other side of the hood to the other front section the same way. Then pin the unstitched portion of the hood to the back section; stitch, securing stitches at beginning and end of stitching line. Press all seams open.

With right sides together, pin and stitch the top of the hood. Press the seam open.

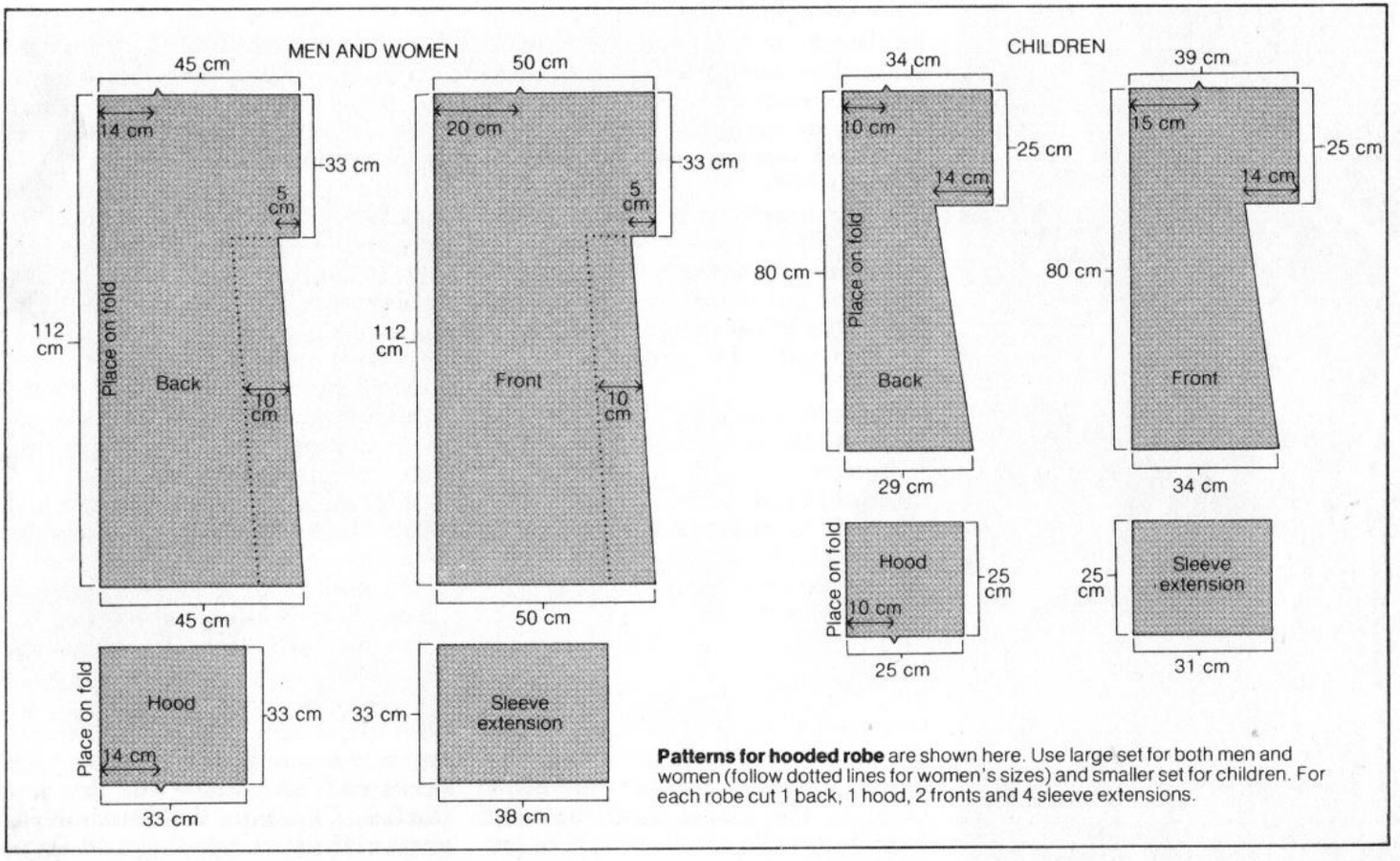
On both front and back sections, place short reinforcing stitches for 2 cm on both sides of each of the underarm corners. With right sides together, pin and stitch the front sections to the back along the underarm and side seams; start 8 cm from each sleeve end, and secure the first few stitches. Clip into the seam allowances at the starting points and at the underarm corner. Press the stitched seams open.

Turn the robe right side out and stitch the remaining 8 cm at the end of each sleeve seam; secure the stitches. Press seams open.

To finish the raw edges along the front, hood, and robe bottom, turn under a 5 cm hem allowance; mitre the corners at the bottom; pin, then tack along fold.

From the wrong side, machine-stitch the hem in place along the hood, the front, and the bottom edge of the robe, placing the stitching line about 1 cm from the raw edges.

Make the decorative bands by joining the 5 cm fabric strips to make




**Patterns for hooded robe** are shown here. Use large set for both men and women (follow dotted lines for women's sizes) and smaller set for children. For each robe cut 1 back, 1 hood, 2 fronts and 4 sleeve extensions.

about 3 metres and the 8 cm strips to make about 2 metres. Fold the long strips in half lengthwise and press lightly to mark centre. Open them out, then press the edges in to meet at the centre line.

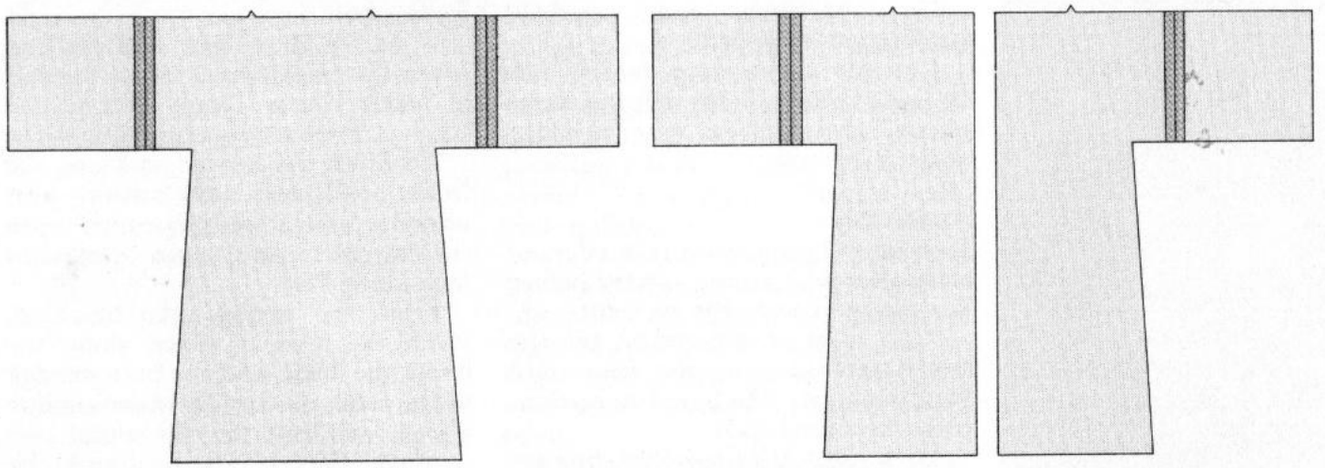
Bind the raw edges of the sleeves with the wide strip, keeping in mind that the sleeve will be turned back to make a cuff. Turn the sleeves back to create 5 cm cuffs. To keep the cuffs from falling, add a French tack at each seam.

To attach decorative band to front opening and hood of robe, unfold one edge of the narrow band and turn under 6 mm at starting end. With right sides together, line up the raw edge of the band with the stitching line along the front opening.

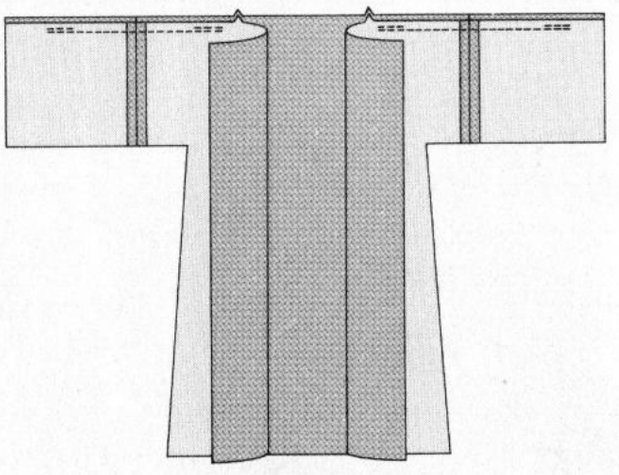
Pin the band to the robe, then machine-stitch within the foldline of the band; turn under 6 mm at the end of the band.

Turn the band to the right side and press; edgestitch along the folded edge of the band through all thicknesses; secure threads at beginning and end.

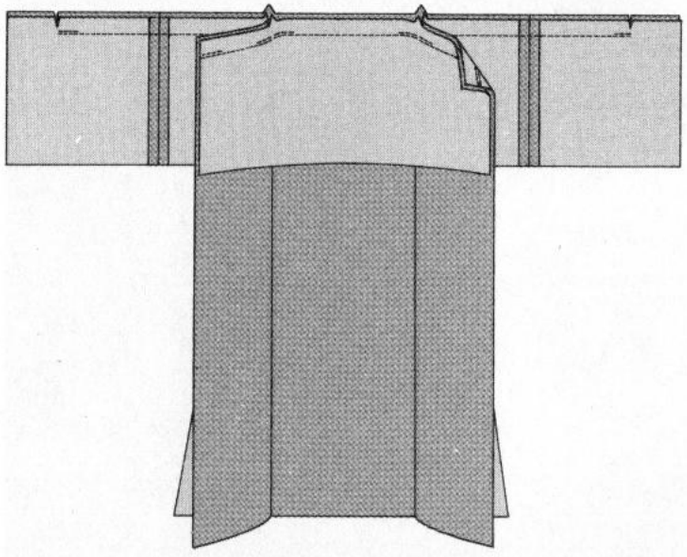
Press entire robe.



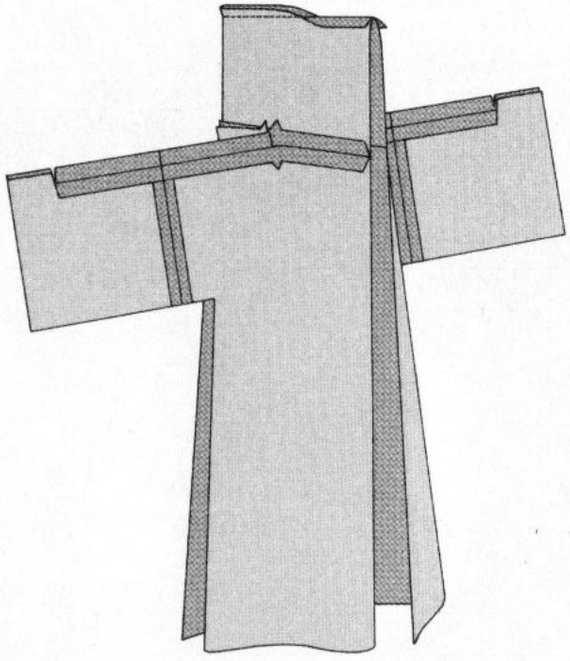
**1** With the right sides facing, pin and stitch the sleeve extensions to both the back and front sections of the robe. Press the seams open.



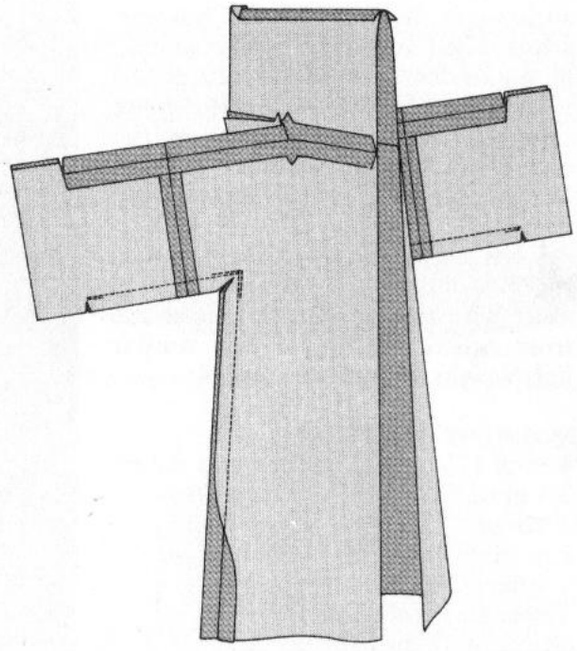
**2** Stitch the front sections to the back along the shoulder seams.



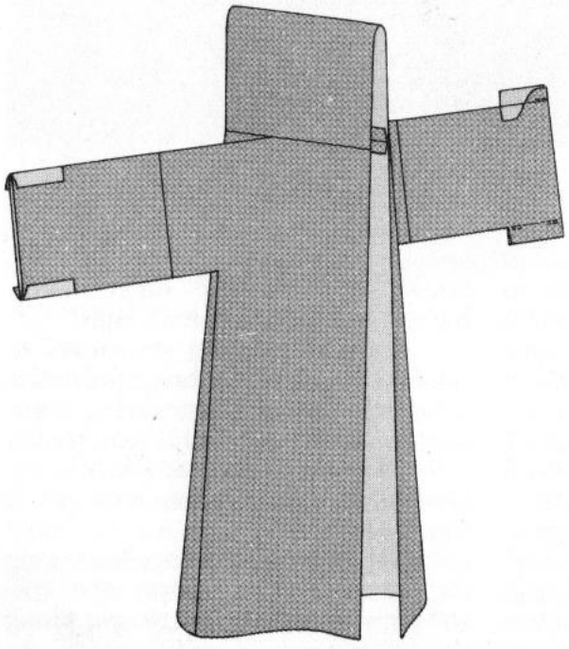
**3** Stitch the hood to the front sections, then to the back; secure stitches.



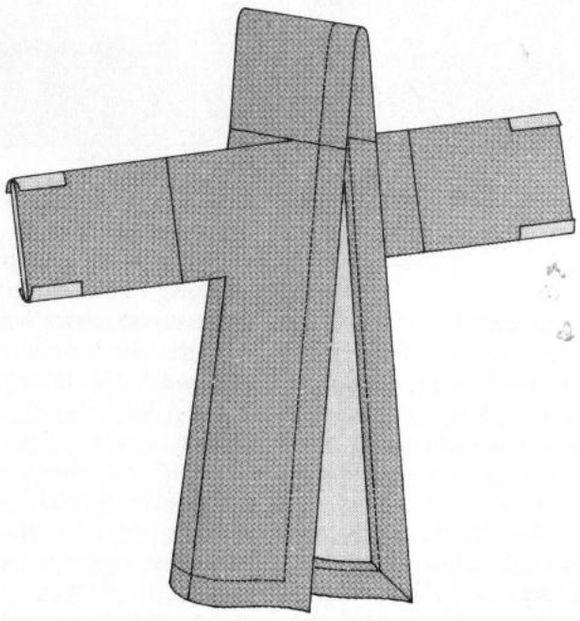
**4** Complete the seam at top of hood, then press the seam open.



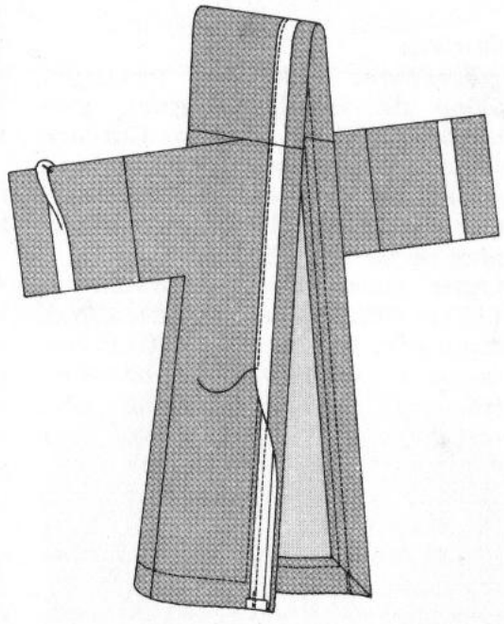
**5** Reinforce corners and complete underarm seams; press open.



**6** With wrong sides facing, complete the seams at sleeve end.



**7** Secure a 5 cm hem allowance along bottom and front opening.

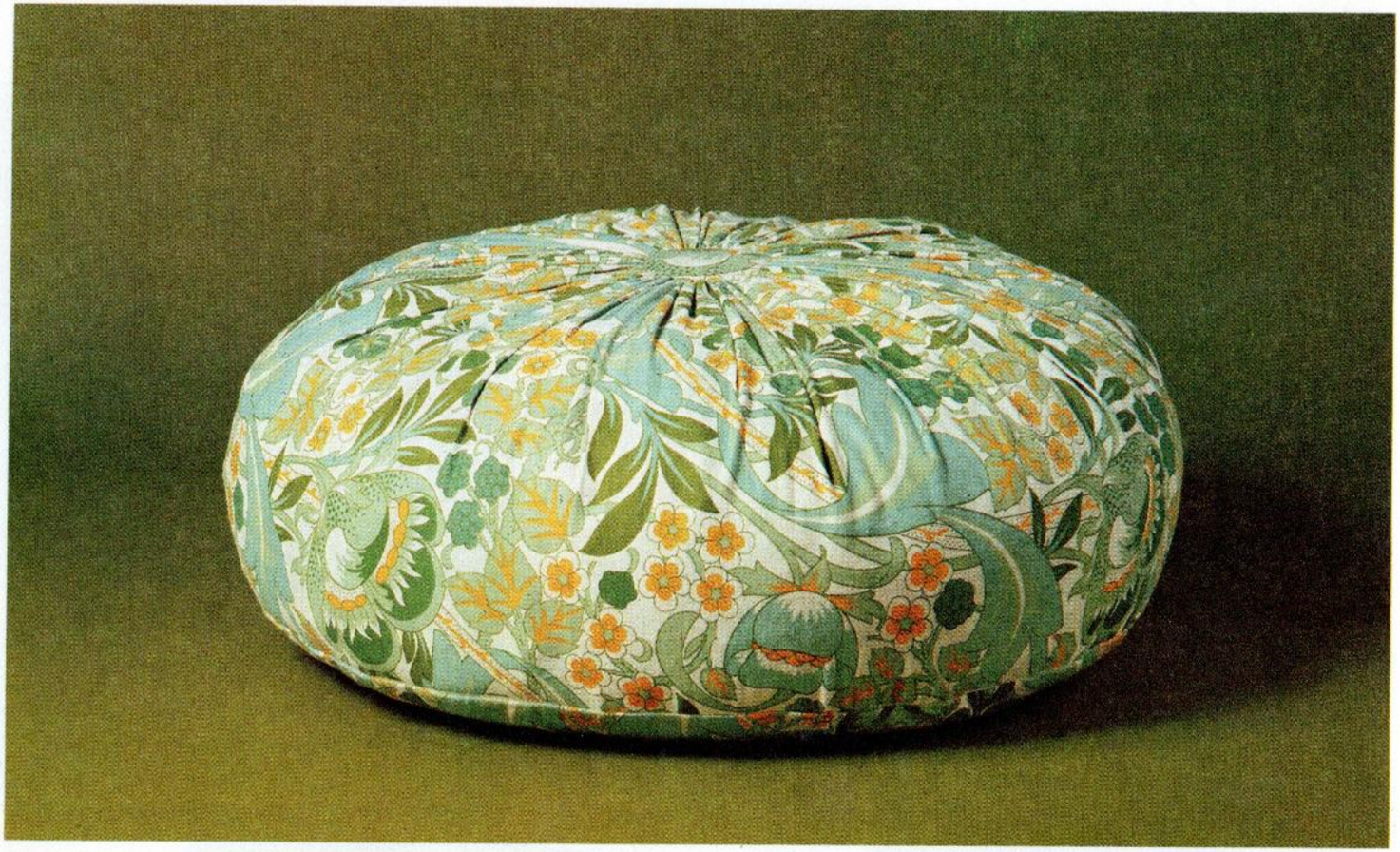


**8** Bind cuff edge. Add decorative band to robe front.

# Giant floor cushion

This lightweight, comfortable floor cushion is big enough to seat an adult. The foam stuffing is contained in an undercover which unzips for extra filling if needed; the outer cover unzips for washing. For firmness, the base is made from two thicknesses of fabric plus a layer of heavy-duty interfacing.

Choose a sturdy fabric for the outer cover, and make sure that it is washable. The undercover can be made from calico, muslin, or any similar lightweight, inexpensive fabric.



### Materials needed

4 m of 115 cm fabric for outer cover
3.4 m of 115 cm fabric for undercover
1 m of 90 cm heavy-duty iron-on interfacing
Three 45 cm zippers
30 cm of 12 mm cotton tape
6 kg of shredded foam
Appropriate thread

### Cutting

**Undercover** Cut two rectangles along the lengthwise grain, each measuring 48 × 142 cm. Cut one circle with a 92 cm diameter, and two semicircles, each with a 92 cm diameter and an added 1 cm seam allowance on the straight edge.

**Outer cover** Cut two 63 cm × 115 cm rectangles across the width of the fabric, and one 63 × 70 cm rectangle across the width of the fabric (these will be pieced to form one long rectangle). For the base, cut four semicircles, each with a 94 cm diameter and an added 1 cm allowance on the straight edge.

Cut two semicircles from the iron-on interfacing, each 90 cm in diameter.

For the button, cut two circles with 15 cm diameters from the cover fabric and two with 14 cm diameters from the iron-on interfacing.

### Assembly

**Undercover** Staystitch the long edges of both rectangles. With right sides facing, pin and machine-stitch the ends of the two large rectangles together. Press seam open. Pin and stitch other ends together to form a circular body.

With right sides facing, pin the circle to one end of the undercover; clip the seam allowances of the undercover as necessary to go around the curves. Machine-stitch as pinned.

Pin the straight edges of the two semicircles together and machine-stitch at each end, leaving a 45 cm opening in the centre. Insert zipper in opening. Attach zippered circle to undercover same way as first circle.

Turn the undercover to the right side and fill it with the shredded foam. Close zipper.

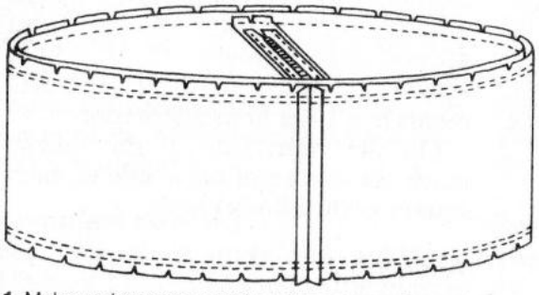
**Outer cover** Staystitch one long edge of all three rectangles. With right sides facing, pin and machine-stitch edges of rectangles together to form one circular body, making sure that fabric pattern (if any) is going in same direction all around. Press seams open.

Place two rows of gathering stitches between each seamline joining along the unstaystitched edge, one a thread's width above seam allowance line, the other 6 mm higher. Leave long thread ends.

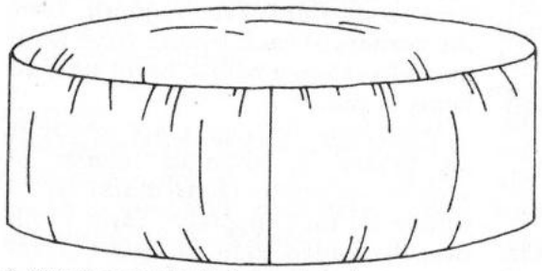
Iron the interfacing semicircles to wrong side of two fabric semicircles (centre the smaller interfacing semicircles on the fabric). With wrong sides together, tack each of the remaining fabric semicircles to a fused semicircle.

Pin the semicircles together along the straight edge; insert the two remaining zippers nose to nose along this edge.

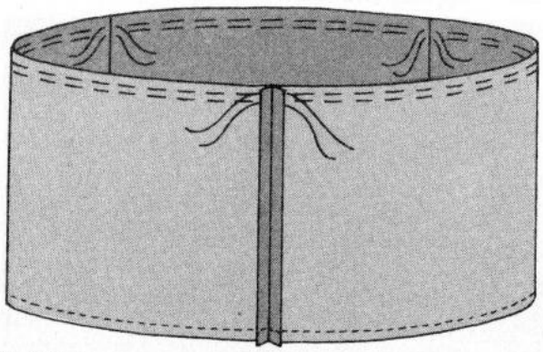
Pin and machine-stitch the stay-



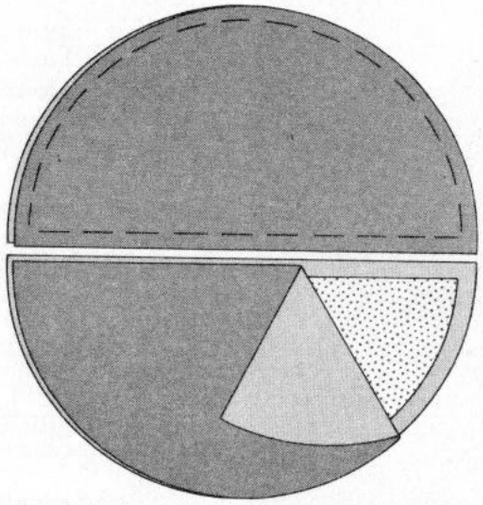
**1** Make undercover, centring zipper across base.



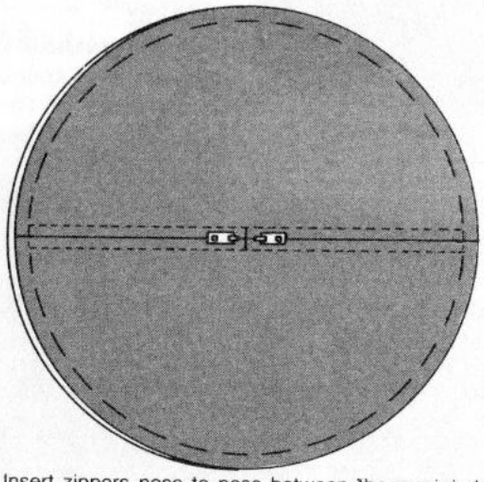
**2** Stuff undercover with foam; close zipper.



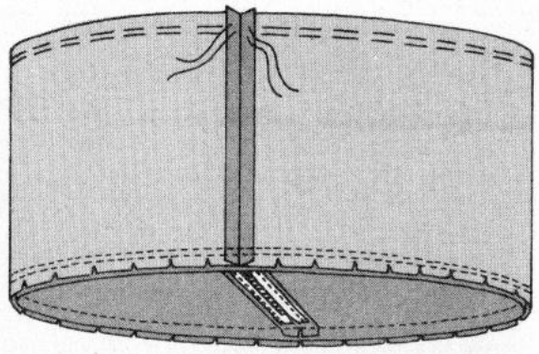
**3** Join cover seams; sew gathering stitches along edge.



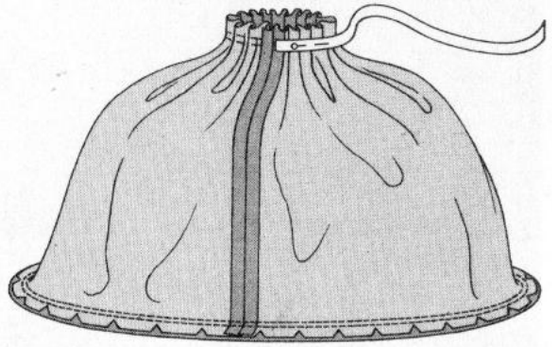
**4** Iron interfacing to one layer of base; tack other layer on top.



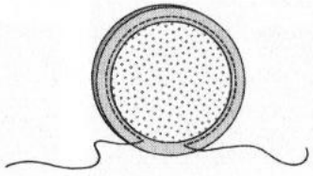
**5** Insert zippers nose to nose between the semicircles.



**6** Sew zippered base to the staystitched edge of cover.



**7** Gather up edge of cover. Pin cotton tape over gathers.



**8** Stitch fused circles together to make button.

stitched edge of body to circular base, right sides together; clip the seam allowances of the body as necessary to go around the curves.

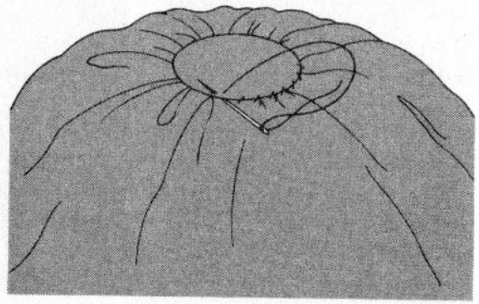
Open the zipper so that you will be able to turn the cover to the right side. Gather the three sections of the top edge by gently pulling on the gathering threads and sliding the fabric along. When sections have been tightly gathered, tie all thread ends.

On the wrong side, pin the cotton tape over the gathers and securely hand-stitch it in place. Then turn the cover right side out.

To make the button, iron a small interfacing circle to each fabric circle. Then, right sides facing, pin fused circles together. Machine-stitch along the 6 mm seamline, leaving an opening for turning. Turn right side out; slipstitch opening closed. (To make button more rounded, fill with foam before slipstitching opening closed.)

Centre the button over the gathers, covering the gathering rows, and pin around the edges. Whipstitch button firmly in place.

Open both cover zippers fully and insert the foam-filled undercover; align zippers on undercover and outer cover before closing latter, to make insertion of extra filling easier.



**9** Whipstitch button in place over top of cover.

# Geometric cushion covers

Zippered for easy removal and cleaning, these appliquéd covers fit a 60 cm square knife-edge cushion form.

The four colours are labelled A, B, C and D, starting from the middle (see diagram below).

## Materials needed

**For two cushions:**

115 cm fabric for each colour
- 0.2 m of colour A
- 0.3 m of colour B
- 0.5 m of colour C
- 2.1 m of colour D

Two 50 cm zippers

Two 60 cm square knife-edge cushion forms

Appropriate thread

## Cutting

**For each cushion cover** Cut a 64 cm square from colour D for the top of the cover. For the cover bottom cut two 33.5 × 64 cm rectangles from colour D. The measurements given include 1.5 cm seam allowances.

Cut squares for the appliqué as follows: from colour A, a 22 cm square; from colour B, a 31 cm square; from colour C, a 43 cm square. Included in these measurements is a 1 cm hem allowance.

On the right side of the fabric, mark the centre of each side of each square with tailor's chalk.

## Assembly

To prepare squares A, B and C for appliquéing, first press under a 1 cm hem on all edges of each square. After the corners of each square have been mitred as shown below, hand-tack all hems in place.

With right sides up, place square A on square B, aligning corners of square A to centre chalk-markings on square B; tack in place. Satin-stitch over the folded edges of square A; remove tacking. (If you do not have a zigzag machine, straight-stitch close to the folded edges.)

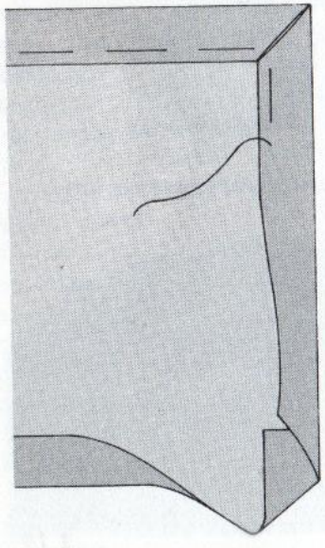
Position and appliqué this stitched square onto square C in the same way.

With right sides up, centre the appliquéd design on the cover top (square D) and, following the same procedure as above, appliqué the design in place.

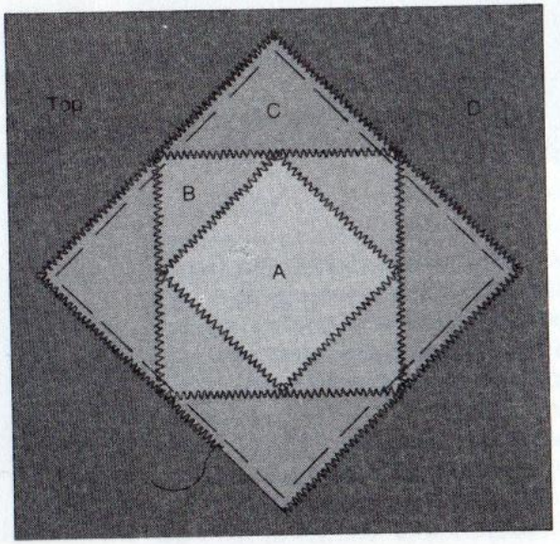
Seam the two rectangles for the bottom of the cover along two of their 64 cm edges, inserting a centred zipper into the seam. Position the zipper so that it is centred along the seam's length.

Open zipper. Match the raw edges of top and bottom cover sections, right sides together; pin along the 1.5 cm seamline. Stitch along the seamline, going across corners to blunt them. Trim seam allowances.

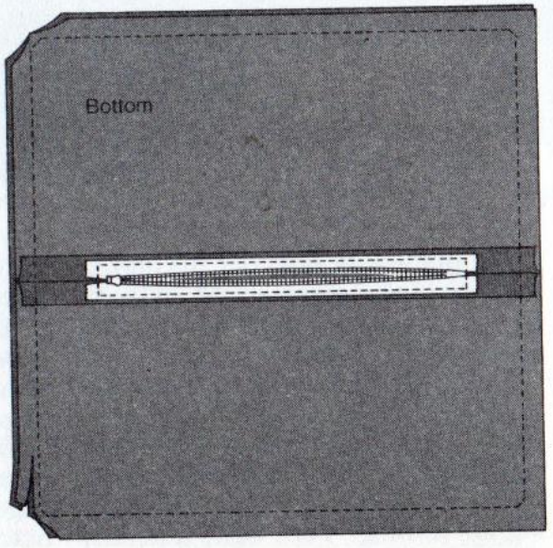
Turn cover right side out through zipper opening; push out on corners to shape cover. Insert cushion form into the cover; close zipper.



**Mitre** each corner of each square.




**Appliqué** completed design onto top of cushion cover.




**Insert zipper** into bottom of cover; sew bottom to top.

# Place mats and napkins

These place mats have patch pockets to hold the napkins. Choose a sturdy fabric such as denim or linen for the mats, and a brightly coloured matching or contrasting cotton or linen for the napkins. Make sure that both fabrics are washable.

## Materials needed

**For four place mats and napkins:**
1.3 m of 115 cm fabric for the place mats
0.9 m of 115 cm fabric for the napkins
Appropriate thread

## Cutting

**The place mats** Cut four rectangles, each measuring 55 × 45 cm. For the pockets, cut four rectangles, each measuring 18 × 22 cm.

To shape the pocket bottom, mark centre of bottom edge, then points on side edges 6.5 cm up from bottom. Connect bottom to side points; cut along these lines.

**The napkins** Cut four pieces of fabric, each measuring 45 cm square.

## Sewing

**The place mats** Seam-finish all of the edges of each place mat. Turn edges under 3 cm and press. Open the edges out. Finish each corner as follows: to form the mitring stitching lines, fold the corner diagonally to the right side, aligning the press lines; press the diagonal fold. Open out corner. Fold the place mat down diagonally at the corner with right sides together, aligning mitring lines, press lines and bottom edges.

Stitch on the matched mitring lines. Trim seam allowances and press the seam open. Turn mitred edges to wrong side.

On the right side, stitch a double row of topstitching all around. Place the first row of stitching 1 cm from the edge; place the second row 1 cm in from the first row.

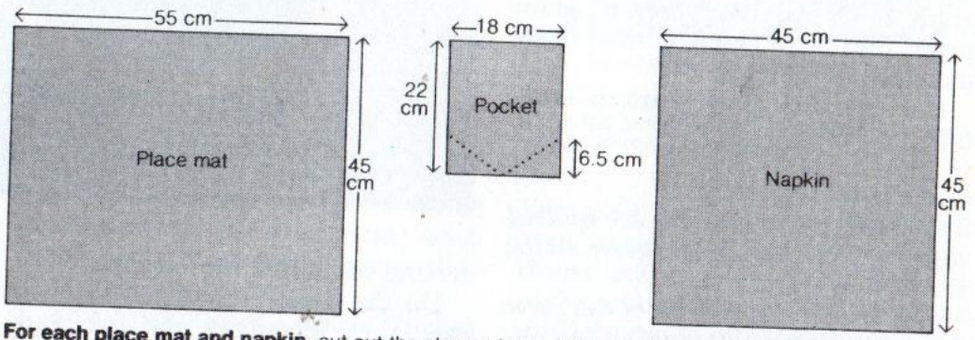
Proceed as follows for each pocket: seam-finish the top edge of the pocket. Turn down a 2.5 cm hem at the top edge; secure it with a double row of topstitching, placing one row 1 cm from the folded edges and the second row 1 cm in from the first.

Turn in a 1.5 cm hem allowance along the remaining three sides and topstitch in place, placing the topstitching 1 cm from the edges.

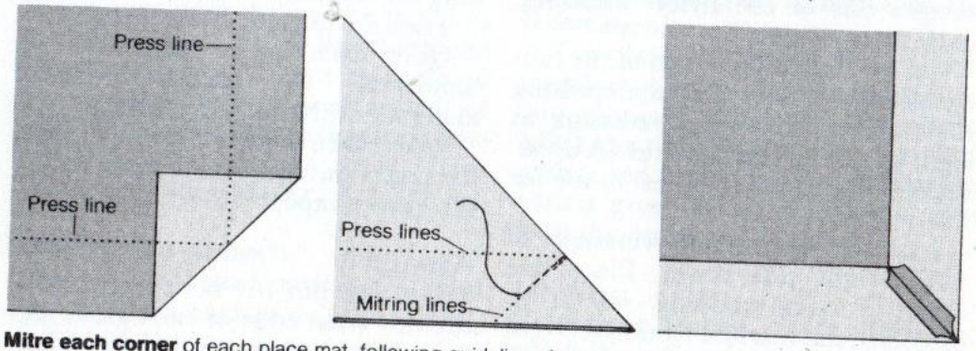
Position the pocket at the top right-hand corner of the place mat so that it will be out of the way of the plate when the mat is in use. Position it 4 cm down from the top of the mat and 2.5 cm in from the right-hand edge.

Topstitch the pocket in place along its side and bottom edges. For reinforcement, backstitch at the top edges of the pocket or stitch bar tacks at each edge.

**The napkins** Form a narrow machine-stitched hem along each edge of each napkin. Hem one edge at a time as follows: turn the edge under 6 mm and press. Turn the edge under another 6 mm and press again. Topstitch along the edges through all layers and press. (It may be necessary to trim the excess fabric at the corners to turn the edges properly.)




**For each place mat and napkin,** cut out the above pieces. Shape bottoms of pocket pieces.




**Mitre each corner** of each place mat, following guidelines formed by precise folding and pressing.

# Oven glove

This quilted oven glove will protect hands against hot dishes and can be conveniently hung near the cooker. The mitt shape will enable you to hold hot dishes firmly and safely.

Choose a strong, flame-resistant fabric and a brightly contrasting trim.

### Materials needed

0.3 m of 115 cm fabric
0.6 m of 150 cm nylon wadding
2 m of narrow hem facing
1 sheet of 5 cm squared dressmaker's pattern guide paper, 30 × 25 cm, *or*
1 sheet of plain paper, 30 × 25 cm
Appropriate thread

### Making the pattern

Draw the glove shape on the dressmaker's pattern guide paper, following the measurements given in diagram 1. Or rule the sheet of plain paper into 5 cm squares, then draw the glove shape on it.

Cut out the glove pattern carefully.

### Cutting and quilting

The fabric and wadding are quilted together first, before the glove shape is cut from them.

Cut four rectangles out of the glove fabric, each 25 × 30 cm. Cut ten rectangles out of the nylon wadding, each 25 × 30 cm.

On the right side of two of the fabric rectangles, draw diagonal quilting lines about 3 cm apart, crossing at right-angles to form squares. (A dressmaker's chalk pencil is best to use for this.)

Lay one unmarked rectangle of fabric right side down. Place five layers of nylon wadding over it; on top place the marked rectangle, right side up. Align all edges and pin all around through all thicknesses.

Do the same with the remaining two fabric rectangles and five wadding rectangles.

Tack the quilting lines by hand.

Quilt each fabric and wadding 'sandwich' by machine-stitching along all of the tacked quilting lines.

When each section is quilted, place the paper pattern over it and cut out the glove shape.

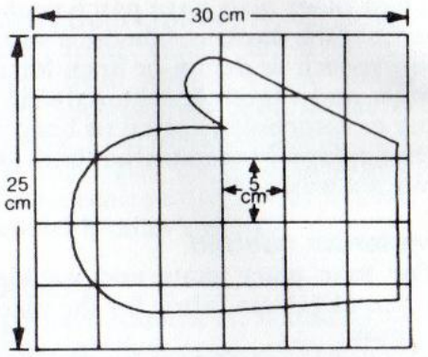
### Assembly

Wrap and pin the hem facing over the raw wrist edge of each glove section. Stitch, through all layers, making sure that both sides of the binding are caught in the stitching.

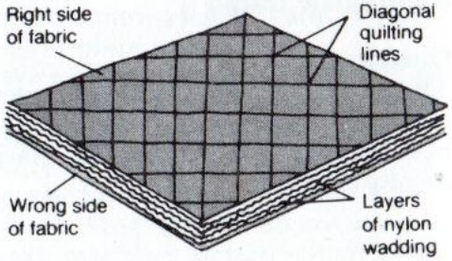
Place the two sections of the glove together, insides facing; pin and tack all around.

Starting at the wrist edge at the top of the thumb, wrap, pin and stitch the hem facing all around the glove. Make sure that both sides of the binding are caught in the stitching.

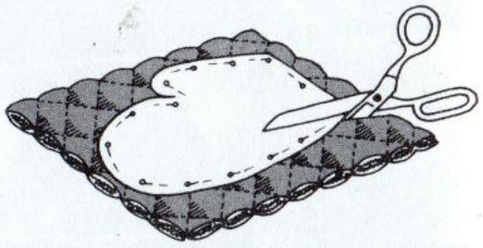
When you reach the opposite wrist edge, carry on folding and stitching a 10 cm length of hem facing off the glove; turn it back toward the glove to form a loop. Whipstitch the end of the loop securely to the glove.



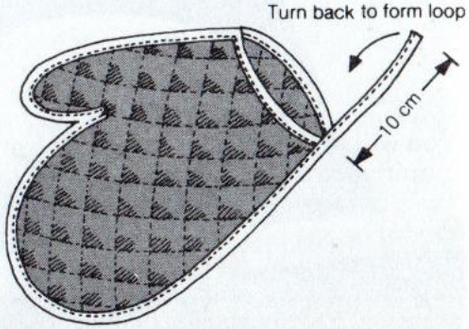

**1** Draw glove pattern on squared paper, following measurements given above.




**2** Draw quilting lines on fabric; sandwich layers of fabric and wadding; quilt.

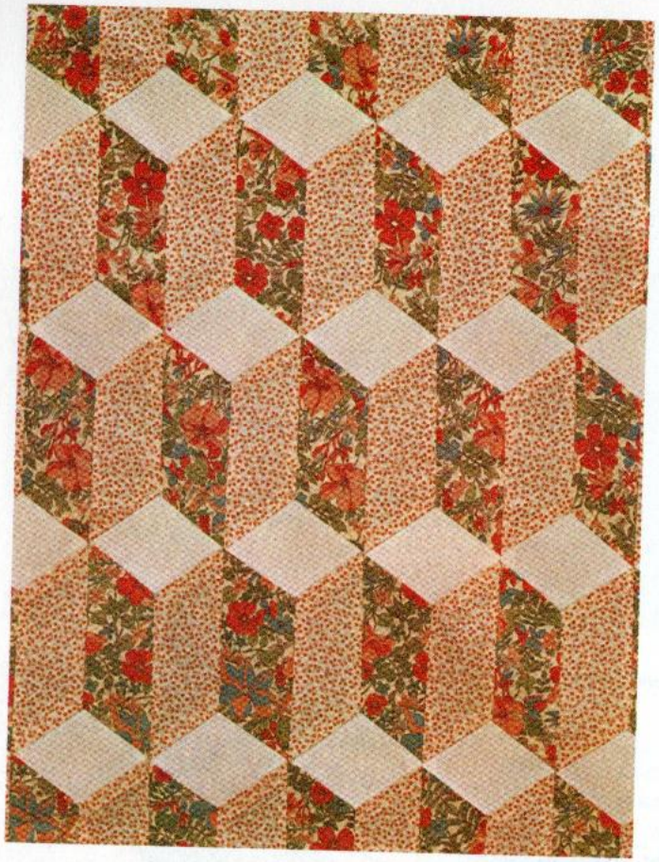


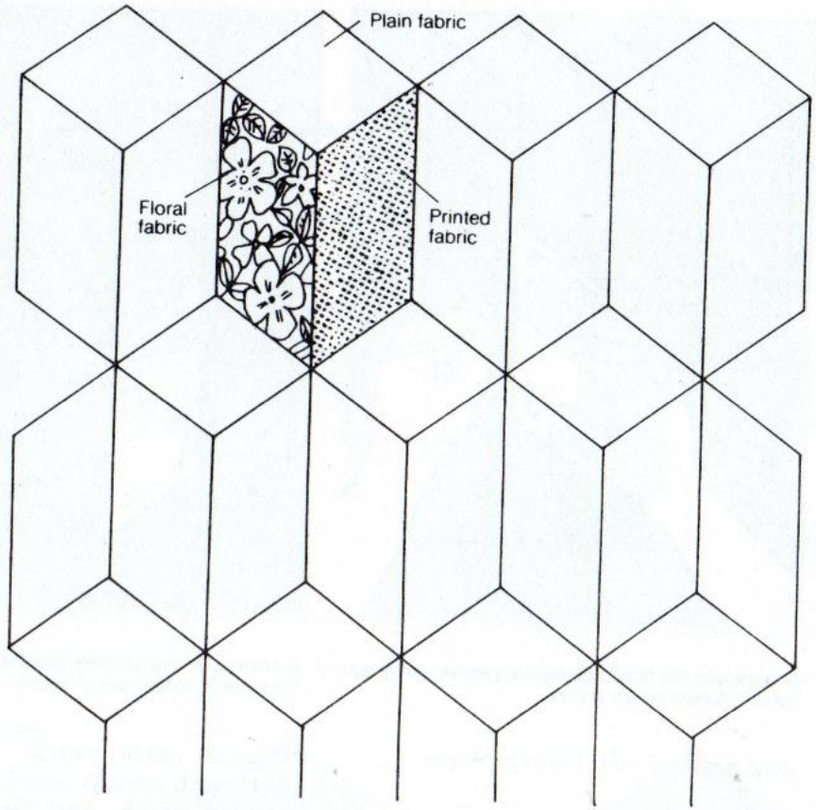
**3** Pin paper pattern to quilted fabric layers; cut out glove shape from each quilted section.



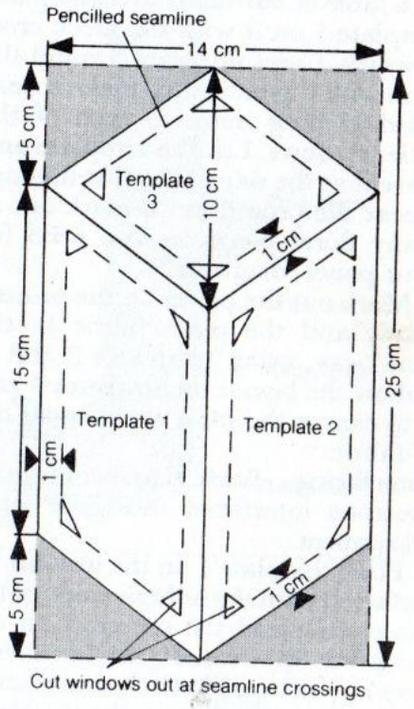

**4** Place glove sections together, insides facing. Bind; form loop at wrist edge.

# Patchwork






**1** Make a scale drawing of the motif and decide on fabric colour and design.




**2** Cut the templates out of cardboard, following measurements given above.

The instructions given here are for a fairly complicated patchwork design which is a variation of the traditional 'Heavenly Steps'. While each motif is composed of three simple shapes, joining the motifs together calls for care, patience and a certain amount of sewing skill.

The patchwork panel can be used as a wall hanging or a cushion cover. You will have to calculate your fabric requirements carefully if you wish to make a larger panel for, say, a bedspread or a quilt.

You can also make up lengths of patchwork and cut them like ordinary fabric to make garments such as skirts and waistcoats.

## Materials needed

**For a panel 110 cm wide by 90 cm long:**

0.75 m of 90 cm floral fabric
0.75 m of 90 cm printed fabric
0.85 m of 90 cm plain fabric
2.35 m of 90 cm fine-grade iron-on interfacing
1 sheet of cardboard
Appropriate thread

## Fabric

Begin by making a scale drawing of the motif, then work out the colouring and the type of fabric you would like to use for each piece of the motif. We chose a floral, a print and a plain, all of the same fabric type (an important consideration if the finished patchwork is to wear and wash evenly; try always to use compatible fabrics for patchwork).

This patchwork design, when pieced, has a jagged edge on all sides. If you are going to use the panel as a wall-hanging, or for anything else where the edges will not be enclosed in a seam, you will need a strip of plain fabric, the circumference of the finished work and at least 10 cm wide, to make a border.

## Making the pattern

Make a cardboard pattern (called a template) for each piece of the motif, following the measurements given in diagram 2. Draw a pencil line 1 cm in from each edge of the template. Where the lines cross, cut little triangles out of the cardboard (these will help you to centre the interfacing on each fabric piece and to keep the seams even).

Template 1 is for the floral fabric, template 2 is for the printed fabric, and template 3 is for the plain fabric. Mark the right side of each template with a red cross and the wrong side with a green cross; mark both sides with the number.

## Marking

**Patchwork pieces** Press the fabric carefully before laying out the pat-

tern pieces.

Lay the floral fabric wrong side up on a table or cutting board and place template 1 on it with the green cross upwards. Carefully trace around the edge with a pencil, and make a pencilled guiding mark in each of the little windows. Lift the template and place it at the side of the first tracing; repeat the procedure to mark out as many floral pieces as you need for your panel (diagram 3).

Mark out the pieces on the printed fabric and the plain fabric in the same way, using templates 2 and 3. Follow the layout on diagrams 4 and 5 to ensure the most economical use of fabric.

**Interfacing** Each patchwork piece must be interfaced *inside* the seam allowances.

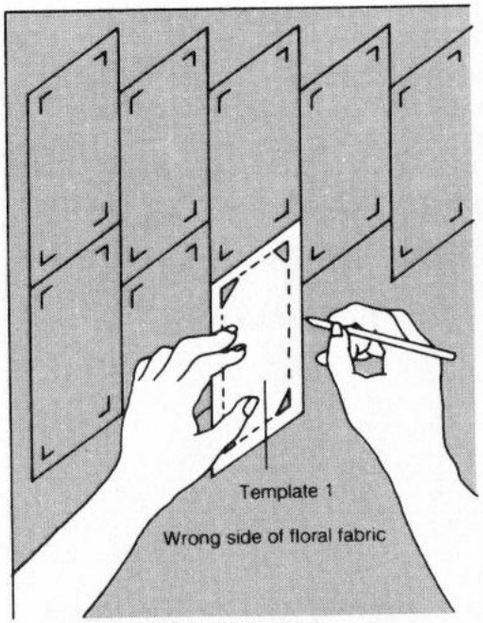
Place template 1 on the iron-on interfacing with the adhesive side of the interfacing and the red cross on the template upwards. *Do not trace around template*; instead, mark the interfacing through the windows in the template, lift the template and join the marks with a pencil and ruler. This will make each interfacing piece 1 cm smaller all around than the patchwork pieces. Mark as many interfacing pieces with template 1 as there are floral pieces.

Repeat this procedure with templates 2 and 3 for the printed and plain patchwork pieces.

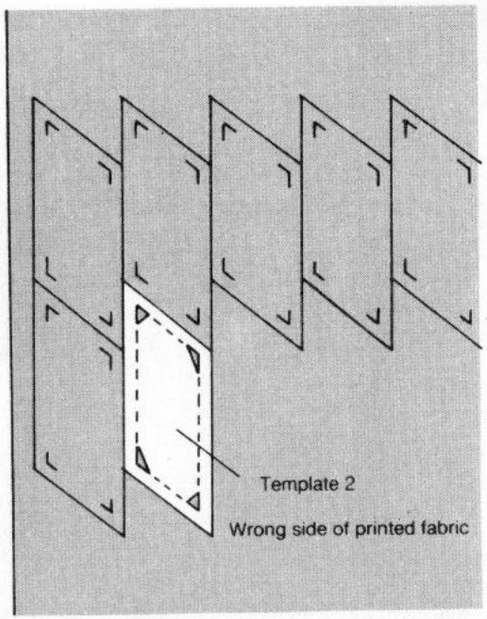
## Cutting

Cut out all the interfacing pieces for the floral patchwork. Iron an interfacing piece onto the wrong side of each floral patch, centring the interfacing on the patch by using the four corner marks on the fabric as a guide (diagram 6). Cut out all the floral patches.

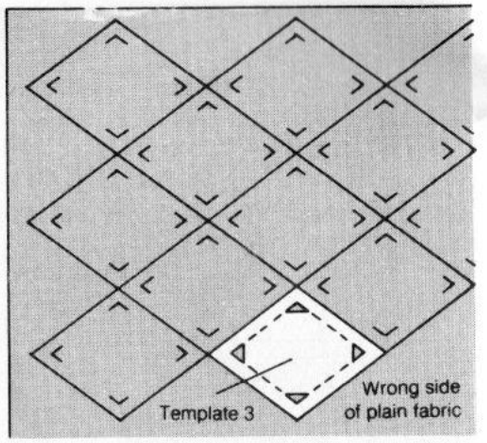
Repeat this procedure for the plain and printed patchwork pieces.




**3** Mark out the floral patchwork pieces using template 1; follow layout above.




**4** Mark out the printed patchwork pieces using template 2; follow layout above.




**5** Mark out the plain patchwork pieces using template 3; follow layout above.

## Assembly

Assemble the patchwork by making vertical strips equal to the length of the finished patchwork.

**First row** Pin a plain patch to the top of a floral patch (diagram 7). Pin a second plain patch to the bottom of the floral patch (8). Machine-stitch the seams, stopping and securing the stitching at the pencilled corner marks.

Stitch a printed patch to the lower plain patch (9), then another plain patch to the bottom of the printed patch (10). Continue in this way, alternating floral and printed patches between the plain patches (11) until you have a strip the desired length of the finished patchwork.

**Second row** Start the next row by stitching on the second side of the original plain patch, making sure that you have a printed patch next to a floral patch, and vice versa (12). Sew a plain patch to the bottom of the printed patch, but do not sew the adjacent plain patches together yet (diagram 13).

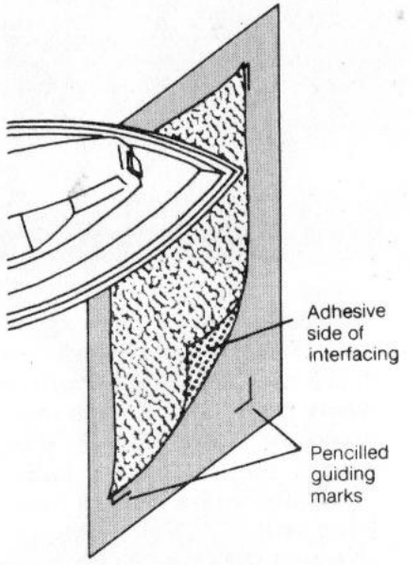
Sew a floral patch to the bottom of the plain patch (14); sew the bottom of the floral patch to the second side of the next plain patch (15).

Continue in this way to match the length of the first row.

When the two rows are equal lengths, stitch the adjacent floral and printed patches together as shown in diagram 16, catching the ends of the adjacent plain patches in the same seam.

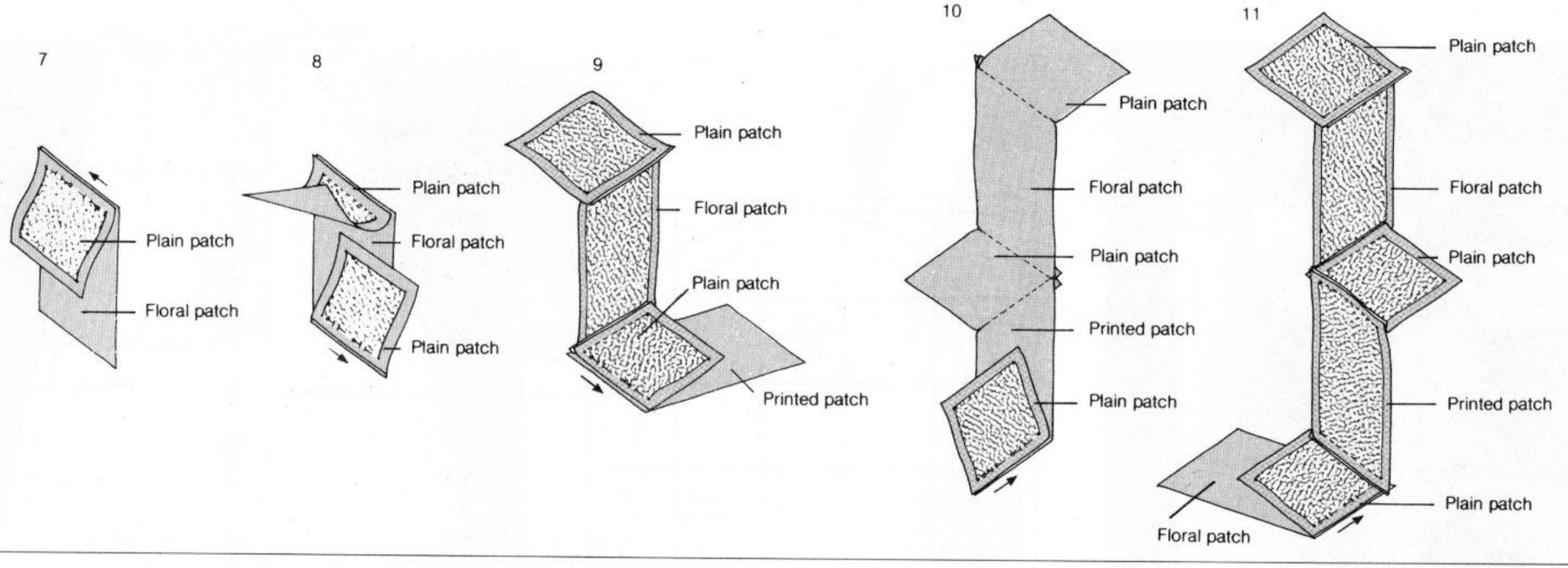
Continue joining rows in this way until the patchwork panel is the desired width. When all seams have been completed, press the seam allowances of the floral and printed patches open and press the plain patches flat.

If desired, attach a plain band all around the finished panel to form a straight border.

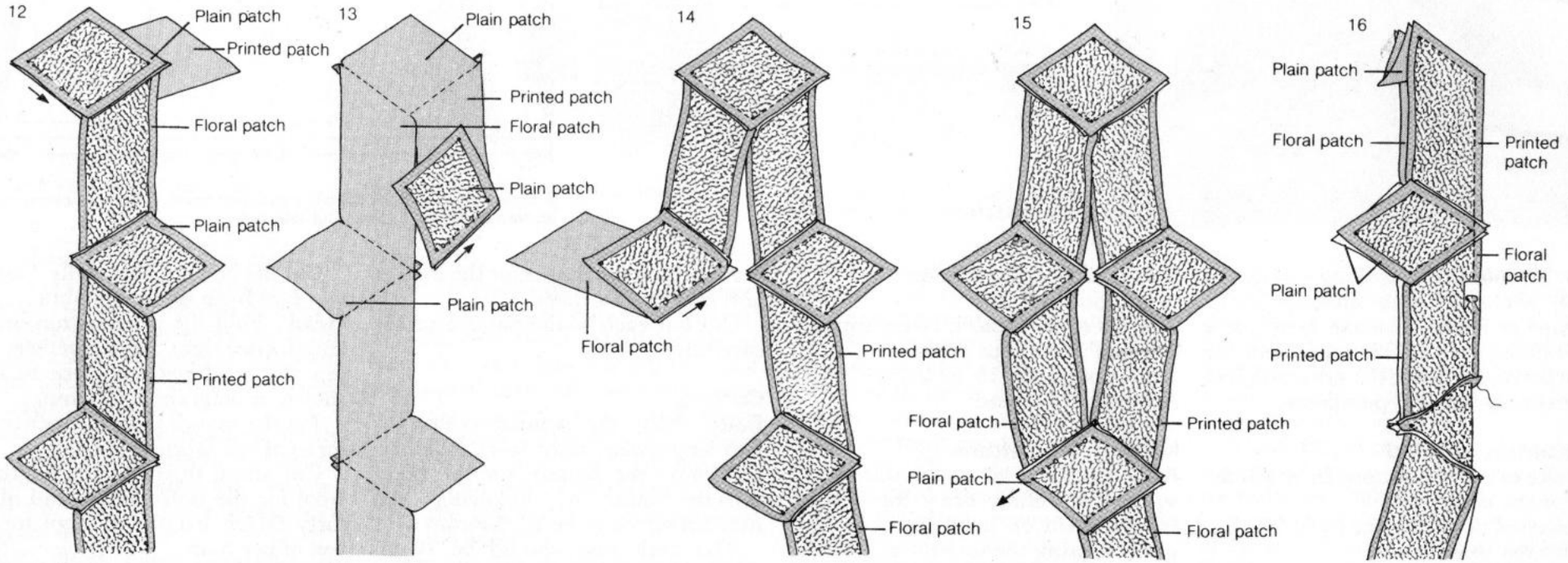



**6** Iron interfacing to wrong side of each patch, using pencilled marks as guides.

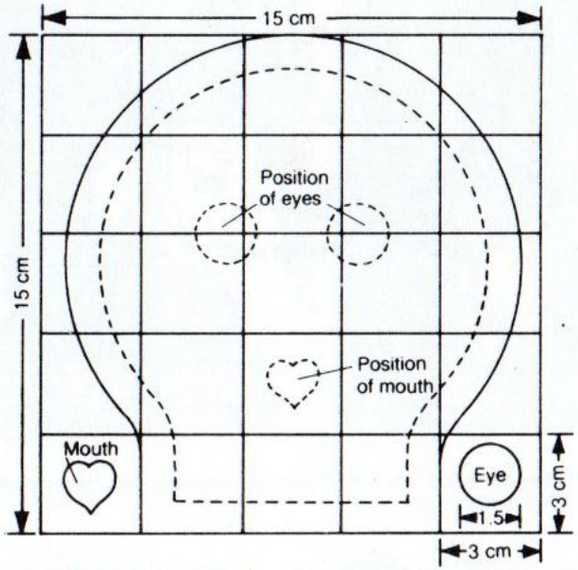
ASSEMBLING THE FIRST ROW



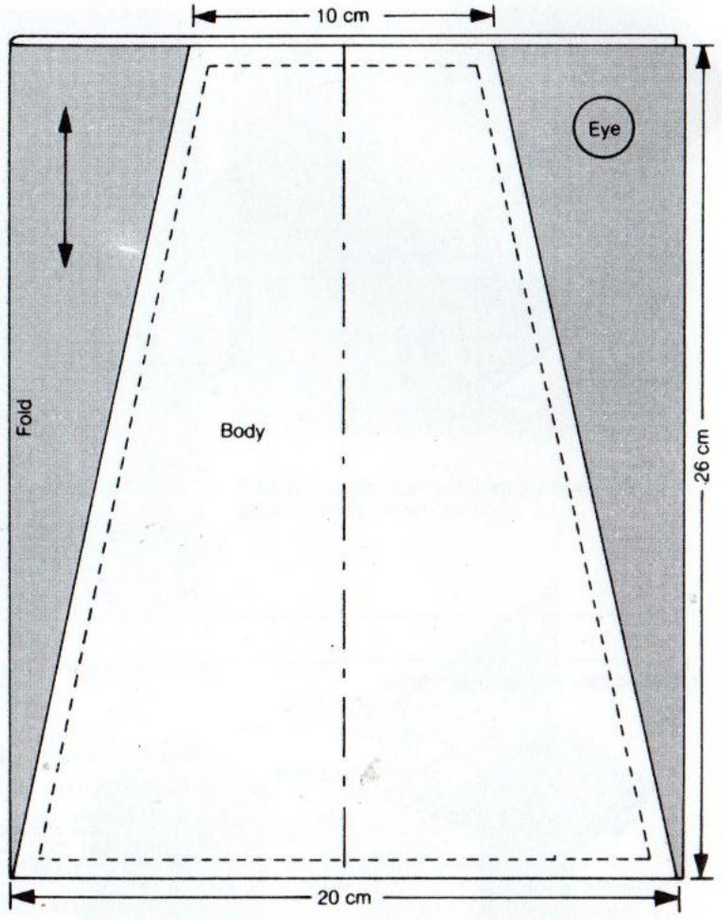

ASSEMBLING THE SECOND ROW



# Rag doll




**1** Draw the pattern for the head on the squared paper, following measurements on diagram above. Draw eyes and mouth also.




**2** Draw pattern for body directly onto folded fabric, following measurements on diagram above. Cut out. Cut eyes out.

As this simple but striking rag doll is only 30 cm high, you can use left-over scraps of fabric to make her. Use a soft filling such as Dacron or flock for the body and head; the arms and feet are simply woollen pompoms.

### Materials needed

1 piece of printed cotton, 26 × 40 cm, for the body
1 piece of plain cotton, 18 × 30 cm, for the head
1 small scrap of red cotton for the mouth
2 balls of wool for hair and pompoms
2 pieces of cardboard, 10 cm square
1 bag of Dacron or flock
1 sheet of paper, 15 × 15 cm
Appropriate thread

### Making the pattern

Rule the sheet of paper into 3 cm squares. Carefully draw the pattern for the head on it as shown in diagram 1, using the squares as a guide. A seam allowance of 1 cm is included all around.

Also draw the shapes for the mouth and eyes on this sheet.

Cut out each of the pattern pieces carefully.

### Cutting

**Body** Fold the printed cotton in two lengthwise, right sides together, and draw the pattern for the body directly onto it, following the measurements given in diagram 2.

The neck edge should be 10 cm across, the base 20 cm and the total length 26 cm.

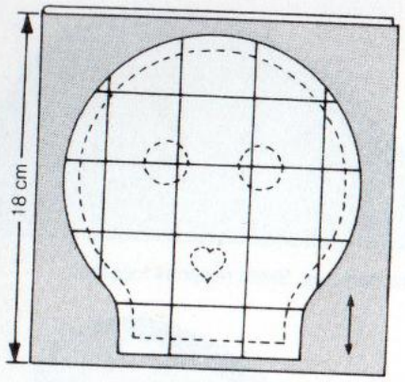
Cut the body out carefully. Cut the two eyes from the same fabric.

**Head** Fold the plain cotton in two lengthwise, right sides together, and pin the head pattern piece to it as shown in diagram 3. Cut out.

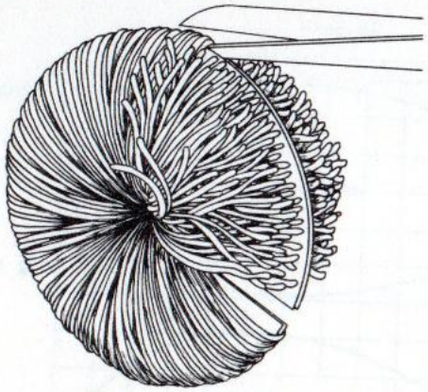
Pin the mouth pattern piece to the scrap of red fabric and cut out.

Cut about thirty 14 cm lengths of wool for the doll's fringe and about forty 50 cm lengths of wool for the rest of her hair.

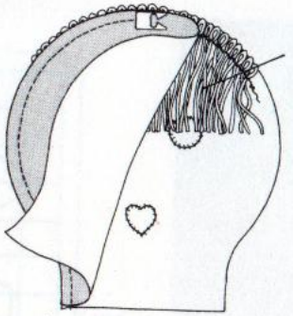
**Pompoms** Cut two circles from the cardboard, about 10 cm in diameter.



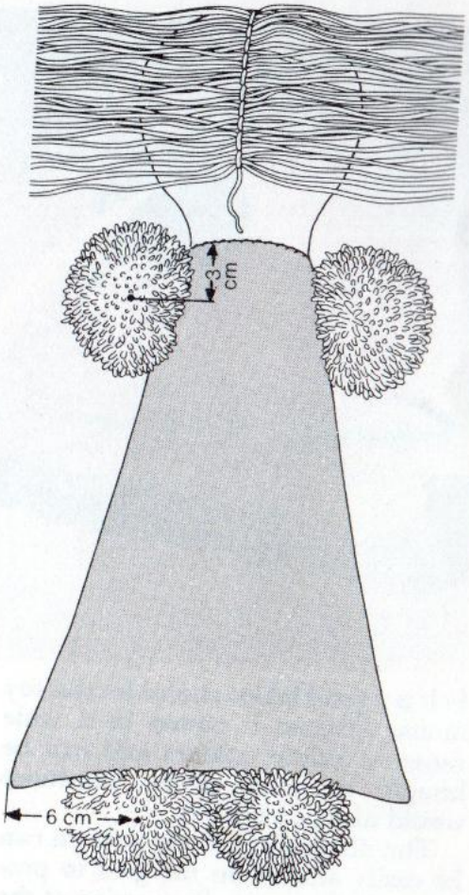

**3** Pin head pattern to folded fabric; cut out.



**5** Wrap wool tightly around rings; cut.

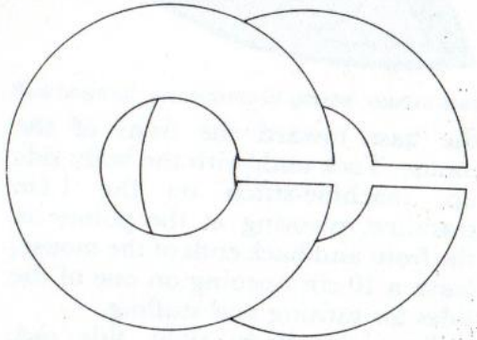



**7** Sew eyes and mouth to head front. Tack wool to head to form fringe. Sew head sections together.

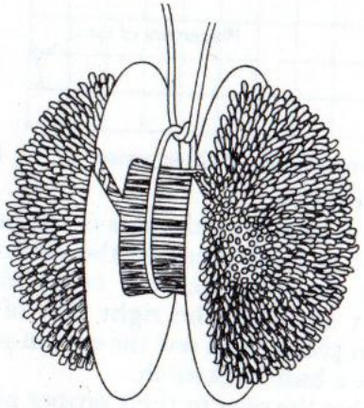



**9** Sew lengths of wool to back of head. Position pompoms on either side of body, and along base.

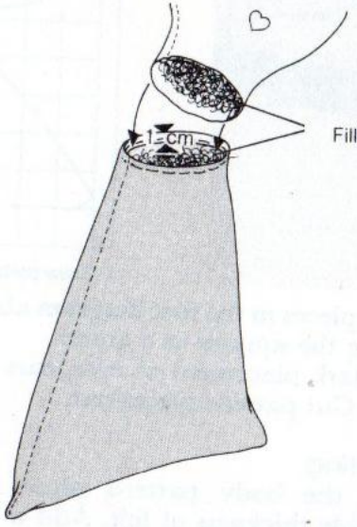
MAKING A POMPOM



**4** Cut cardboard rings as shown above.



**6** Pull rings apart; tie string around wool.




**8** Fill body and head. Place head in body opening and stitch together, easing body slightly to fit.

From these, cut two inner circles to leave a broken ring (diagram 4). Place the two rings together and wind wool tightly around them until the card is completely covered. Then cut around the edge of the rings, through the wool (diagram 5).

Pull the cardboard rings gently apart, and tie a length of strong thread or string around the wool between the rings to form a pompom (diagram 6).

Make three more pompoms in exactly the same way.

## Assembly

Place the two body sections together, right sides facing; pin and tack all around. Sew them together 1 cm in from the raw edges, leaving the neck edge open; turn right side out. Turn neck edge under 1 cm and tack down.

Fold one of the head sections in two to mark the centre line; pin the eyes to the right side of this section, 5 cm from the top and an equal distance from the centre.

Sew the eyes on with a short, wide zigzag or closely-spaced whipstitches; embroider a small white circle in the centre of each eye for the pupils.

Attach the mouth in the same way, also on the centre line, about 9 cm from the top of the head.

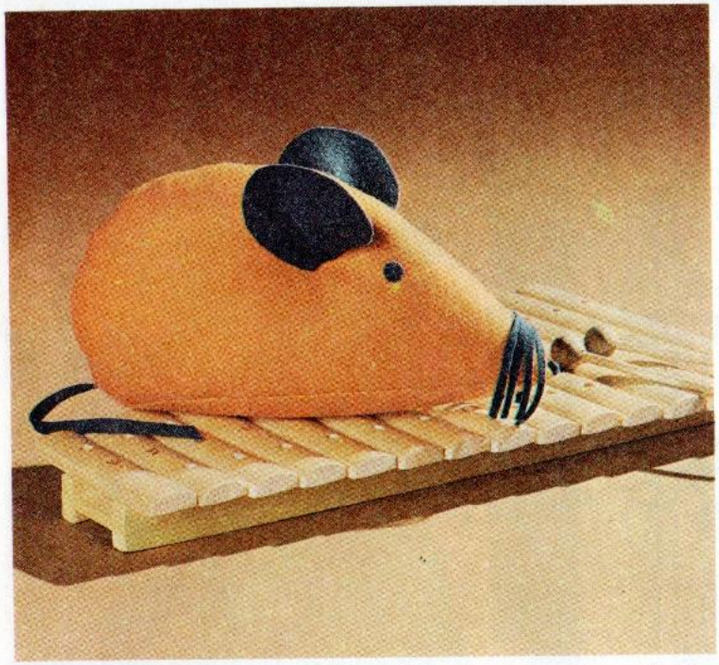
Fold each 14 cm length of wool in two and tack them in a row along the top of the front head section to form the fringe. Place the head sections together, right sides facing, and stitch around the edge, leaving the neck edge open. Make sure that the tacking stitches holding the fringe in place are caught inside the head seam allowance. Turn head right side out.

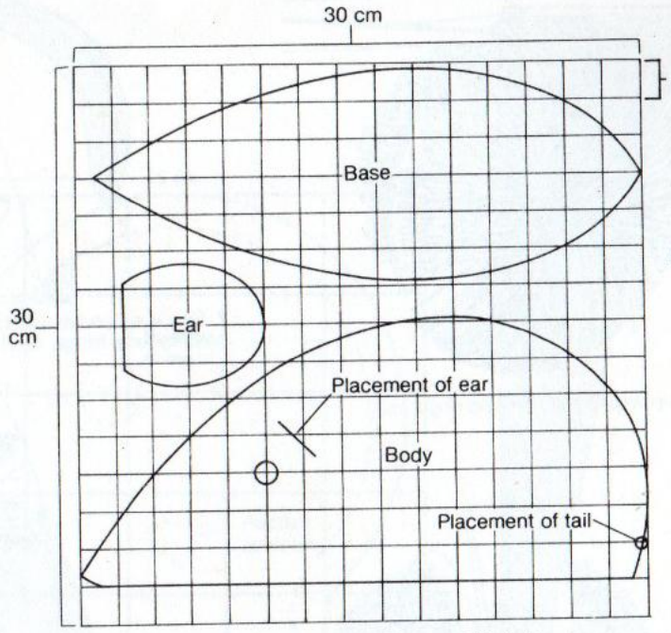
Fill the body and the head. Position the head in the opening at the top of the body, matching side seams. Stitch the two sections together with small, closely-spaced whipstitches, easing the body slightly to fit.

Attach the 50 cm lengths of wool to the centre back of the head with backstitches. Plait the wool.

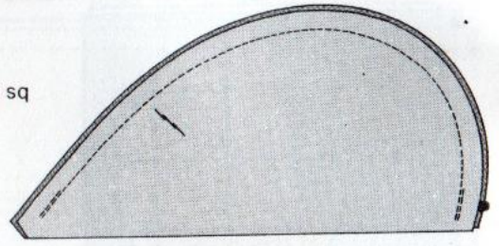
Attach one pompom on each side of the body 3 cm down from the neck, and two along the base of the body, each one 6 cm in from a corner.

# Felt mouse

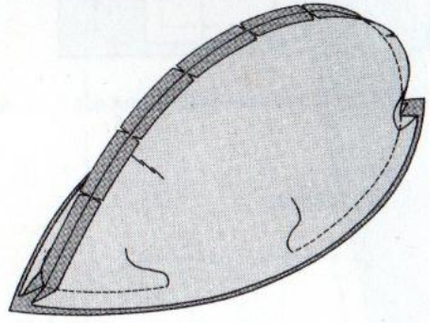





1 Draw pattern on graphed paper. Cut out all felt pieces



2 Attach eyes, ears, tail. Stitch sections together.



3 Stitch base to body, leaving 10 cm opening. Turn and stuff.

Felt is a good fabric choice for this toy mouse because it comes in a wide range of bright colours and can be bought in small pieces. Corduroy would also be suitable.

The dimensions of the pattern can be easily altered on the grid to produce a larger or smaller version of the mouse.

### Materials needed

1 piece of felt, 20 × 62 cm, for the body
1 piece of felt, 32 × 15 cm, for the base
Scraps of felt for eyes, ears, whiskers, tail and nose
1 bag of Dacron or flock
1 sheet of paper, 30 × 30 cm
Glue
Appropriate thread

### Making the pattern

Graph the sheet of paper into 2 cm squares, and reproduce on it the pattern pieces in the first diagram above, using the squares as a guide.

Mark placement of eyes, ears and tail. Cut pattern pieces out.

### Cutting

Pin the body pattern piece to a double thickness of felt. Add a 1 cm seam allowance all around when cutting out.

Pin and cut the base from a single layer of felt; add a 1 cm seam allowance all around when cutting out.

Mark the seam allowance around the body and base pieces, and also mark the placement for the eyes, ears and tail.

From the felt scraps, cut two ears, using the pattern. In addition, cut out a rectangle 15 cm long by 2 cm wide for the whiskers, and a strip 20 cm long by 1 cm wide for the tail.

Cut two circles, each 1 cm in diameter, for the eyes. Cut one circle, 2 cm in diameter, for the nose.

### Assembly

Before attaching the ears to the body, make a 1 cm pleat in the centre of each ear. Pin each ear at its placement mark on the right side of the main pieces, and sew the ears in place with a half-backstitch.

Glue the eyes in their proper place.

Pin the tail to the right side of one of the body pieces at its placement mark; one end of the tail strip should be even with the raw edge.

With right sides facing, pin the two body pieces together along the upper curve. Machine-stitch on the 1 cm seamline, catching the tail in the stitching; start and stop 1 cm from the raw edges at the bottom, securing the stitching with a few backstitches at beginning and end.

Press seam flat; trim to 5 mm. Notch out excess fullness from seam allowances and finger-press open.

Pin the base to the body, with right sides facing and the narrower end of the base toward the front of the mouse. Tack and, with the body side up, machine-stitch on the 1 cm seamline, pivoting at the points on the front and back ends of the mouse; leave a 10 cm opening on one of the sides for turning and stuffing.

Turn the body right side out. Centre and pin the rectangle for the whiskers over the centre seamline, 3 cm from front tip of mouse.

Securely sew whiskers in place, using half-backstitches along the seamline. Snip each side of the rectangle into 5 mm strips to represent whiskers.

Stuff the body of the mouse with Dacron or flock, packing it well. Turn the raw edges in the length of the opening and slipstitch it closed.

Run a gathering thread around the edge of the 2 cm circle; pull it into a ball and stuff to form nose. Sew securely to front tip of mouse, hiding the gathering thread in the stitches.